BLOODSPORT

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FADE IN

1 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY

A KOREAN TRAINER in a heavy parka removes a wooden bucket from a block of ice suspended from the branch of a tree.

PULL BACK to reveal a dozen blocks of ice hanging at eye level from other trees. The Trainer bows to someone off-camera and then steps away from the trees.

CHONG LI, a strapping Korean in his late twenties dressed in a ghi, stands barefoot before the gauntlet of trees laden with ice blocks. Suddenly he is moving towards the first block with incredible speed. Leaping into the air and spinning at the same time, Chong Li slams the blade of his foot into the ice, pulverizing it into innumerable shards.

Continuing down the gauntlet, he demolishes each block of ice with hammer-blows from his feet. When he finishes he smiles arrogantly to his Trainer.

TRAINER
Tomorrow we leave for the Kumite.

BEGIN CREDITS and MUSIC -- something with a slow intro that gradually builds to a steady rock beat with a hint of menace. Definitely something you can dance -- or fight to.

2 INT. KUMITE ARENA - DAY

A huge, cavernous vault beneath the "Forbidden City" in Hong Kong has been transformed for the Kumite. The once-bare walls of the chamber are now decorated with ornate Oriental banners. Lights have been rigged from the ceiling. A raised fighting platform has been assembled in the center of the arena.

As workmen hoist a huge electronic scoreboard into position above the platform, several members of the Black Dragon Society tour the place with the foreman of the construction crew.

3 EXT. COUNTRY ESTATE - DAY

PER GUSTAFSON, a powerful Bjorn Borg look-alike, practices standing flips on an expansive perfectly manicured lawn.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

Forty yards away from him, a liveried SERVANT places a stack of boards across a pair of blocks then signals with a hand-wave to Per. Per runs towards the boards. He executes a graceful series of handsprings then vaults into the air, turns a somersault and brings his legs CRASHING down on the boards. They shear apart as if cut by a buzzsaw.

4 INT. DOJO - DAY

Two Chinese kung fu practitioners, TOON and his partner CHUAN, move through their two-man wazas with speed and grace. They repeat the set of complex "forms" several times, each time executing the moves faster and faster.

5 EXT. BRAZILIAN JUNGLE - NIGHT

A human "cockfight" in the Amazon basin -- bettors and spectators CHEERING on their fighter. PAREDES, a master of kampalo, bloodies his opponent with his a series of agile moves strung together like a choreographed dance.

The small crowd starts SHOUTING for Paredes to finish him off. Within moments, Paredes slices him into submission.

6 INT. GYM - DAY

An American boxer, RAY JACKSON, beats a rhythm against a speed bag with his right hand. Once he gets it going, he uses his left to start a rhythm against a second speed bag. As Jackson stands between the two bags, making them "dance", another BOXER approaches him.

BOXER
Hey, Jackson! You really goin' to Hong Kong?

JACKSON
(without missing a beat)
Some guys ski, some guys fish. I fight full contact.

BOXER
I heard you could get killed in that Kumite!

JACKSON
Only if you fuck up.

Strutting his stuff, Jackson doubles his speed against the bags.

7 INT. KUMITE ARENA - DAY

The lights on the electronic scoreboard flash on as the construction crew adds the final touches to the arena.

8 INT. WRESTLING RING - NIGHT

FUKAI, a massive Japanese Sumo, wraps his arms around an even larger opponent and begins to squeeze the breath out of him.

With astonishing strength, Fukai hoists his opponent into the air and heaves him halfway across the mat where he falls in an unconscious heap. Fukai's fans go wild.

9 EXT. SUGAR CANE PLANTATION - DAY

Under the watchful eye of his trainer, FELIPE MORRA, a Filipino expert in pencak-silat, prepares for the Kumite by slicing down row after row of sugar cane stalks with his bare hands.

10 EXT. TRAINING COMPOUND - (CAMP PEARY, VIRGINIA) - DAY

A sign posted outside the tall chain link fence warns:

RESTRICTED AREA
NO TRESPASSING

11 INT. GYM - DAY

CLOSE ON A BLURRED SPEED BAG as it's swatted about.

PULL BACK to reveal that the bag is being hit with the fighter's foot! FRANK DUX, twenty-years-old, balances himself on one leg while he beats out a rhythm. He then switches legs and raps a rhythm with his other foot.

CREDITS END

A Defense Intelligence Agency AIDE approaches him and waits respectfully for Frank to finish.

AIDE
Excuse me, Corporal. Colonel Cooke needs to see you before you leave on furlough.

FRANK
Is there a problem?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

AIDE
The Colonel found out you're going to Hong Kong. He wants to talk to you about it.

FRANK
Tell the Colonel I'll be right there. I want to shower first.

AIDE
Fine. I'll wait.

Frank turns to the speed bag and kicks it one last time, ripping it from its mounting.

12 INT. KUMITE ARENA - DAY

After inspecting the set-up, the head man from the Black Dragon Society nods approval to the others.

13 INT. SHOWER AREA - DAY

The DIA aide enters.

AIDE
Hey, Dux! What's taking so long?

There's no response.

AIDE
Dux?

He moves towards the SOUND OF THE WATER.

He finds the water running but the stall is empty. He looks around. There's no Frank anywhere.

AIDE
What the...?

14 EXT. TRAINING COMPOUND - DAY

The Aide proceeds towards Colonel Cooke's office. He passes a sign that reads:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

15 INT. COLONEL COOKE'S OFFICE - DAY

The Colonel's Aide enters and salutes. Cooke returns the salute.

COLONEL
Where's Dux?

AIDE
I don't know. I found him at the gym like you said. He wanted to take a shower. I waited for him and he disappeared.

COLONEL
What do you mean he disappeared?

AIDE
(shrugging)
One minute he was there, the next he wasn't.

COLONEL
(apoplectic)
You fucking incompetent! If anything happens to Dux in Hong Kong we'll all be scrubbing latrines in the Aleutians!
(a beat)
Get Helmer and Rawlins on this right away. I don't want to see your face until Dux is standing right beside it.

16 INT. JET CABIN - DAY

PANNING the mostly Asian passengers, WE SETTLE ON Fukai occupying two seats on the aisle -- a fat, contented airborne buddha.

17 INT. TERMINAL - HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Chong Li and his Trainer wait for their bags to come around on the circular conveyor in the baggage claim area. When Chong Li spots them, he muscles an old man reaching for his own bag out of the way. The old man is about to protest when he sees the expression on Chong Li's face and thinks better of it.

Paredes, gathering his luggage at a nearby conveyor, stops to watch Chong Li intimidate the old man. Chong Li and Paredes exchange a look. Paredes is the first one to break his stare.

18 INT. PENISULA HOTEL - DAY

A fading landmark in Kowloon City -- the Penisula was once the British hotel in the colony of Hong Kong. It has long since seen better days.

JANICE DUREN, an attractive 23-year-old stringer for an American newspaper, is sitting at the bar with Toon and Chuan trying to get an interview.

JANICE
Are you two here for the Kumite?

Toon and Chuan exchange a look.

TOON
Kumite? What is Kumite?

JANICE
Don't shit me, guys. I know there's a secret full contact event being held in Hong Kong in the next few days.

CHUAN
If it secret, how come you know about it?

She gives Chuan a look.

JANICE
Give me a break.

Chuan recognizes another Chinese entering the bar. He calls out to him in Chinese. The Chinese joins Toon and Chuan. They exchange high fives. Janice leaves money at the bar for the drinks and walks away in frustration.

19 EXT. TANAKA HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank pushes open a wooden gate and walks towards the house, a modest structure on a rural tract outside of Modesto.

Before knocking on the door, he takes off his shoes and places them on the doormat.

MRS. TANAKA, a small Japanese woman in her fifties, opens the door and beams when she sees Frank. He gives her a big hug.

MRS. TANAKA
Frank! I didn't think you come until tomorrow!

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

FRANK
I got an early start.

MRS. TANAKA
Very nice of Uncle Sam to give you time.

Frank smiles to himself -- if she only knew. Mrs. Tanaka brings Frank into the house.

20 INT. TANAKA HOUSE

Decorated with Japanese art and furniture, the interior of the house transports us to the Far East.

FRANK
How is he?

MRS. TANAKA
He's resting now. He be so happy to see you!

Frank looks around the room, taking in the familiar objects.

FRANK
It's good to be here again.

His eyes linger on a gold-emblazoned Katana sword hung over an ornamental urn on a Buddhist altar. As Frank looks at the sword, he thinks back to first time he saw it:

21 EXT. TANAKA HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

YOUNG FRANK, age thirteen , peers through a side window. He's wearing a San Francisco Giants baseball cap, a tee shirt and blue jeans -- like any American kid.

Flanking him are CHUCK and EDDIE. At fourteen, they're a full year older than Frank.

21A INT. TANAKA HOUSE - CLOSE ON SWORD

gleaming over the altar as it catches the late afternoon sun.

21B EXT. TANAKA HOUSE - DAY

The three kids are mesmerized by the sword, especially Frank.

(CONTINUED)

21B CONTINUED:

EDDIE
Let's get it.

He slides the window up and crawls through. Chuck nudges Frank to follow. Frank hesitates.

CHUCK
Go ahead, Frank.

Frank still doesn't move.

CHUCK
What's the matter, you chicken?

FRANK
No.

CHUCK
Then get in there.

EDDIE
(calling from inside)
Let's go, Frank. You wanted to hang out with us....

Frank reluctantly crawls through the open window.

21C INT. TANAKA HOUSE

While Chuck and Eddie go for the sword, Frank looks around the room. He's enthralled by the Japanese artifacts. He finds a framed photograph of a young Japanese man holding a trophy. (Tanaka after he won the Kumite.)

Chuck and Eddie remove the Katana sword from the wall and look around for something else to steal. They see Frank looking at the photo.

CHUCK
(to Frank)
You just gonna stand there, or are you gonna help us?

They HEAR THE SOUND OF A TRUCK pulling into the driveway.

EDDIE
Shit, they're coming back! Let's get outta here!

As Eddie and Chuck head for the open window they drop the Katana sword.

(CONTINUED)

21C CONTINUED:

CHUCK
C'mon, Frank!

EDDIE
Forget about him. Let's go.

Eddie quickly follows Chuck out the window, leaving Frank inside.

Frank picks up the sword and holds it in his hands. He's overcome by an almost hypnotic sensation as he feels its power. A NOISE at the front door startles him.

SHINGO TANAKA, also thirteen, rushes at him. Before Frank has a chance to react, the young Japanese kicks the sword out of his hands. A second kick knocks Frank to the ground. As he struggles to his feet, Shingo uses his martial arts skills to send him reeling to the floor again.

SENZO TANAKA, Shingo's sixty-year-old father, enters the room and watches as his son repeatedly upends Frank. He sees that this young Occidental intruder has an indomitable fighting spirit -- Frank literally refuses to give up.

If anything, it's Shingo who is tiring. Finally, Tanaka steps between the two boys and stops them.

TANAKA
Enough!
(a beat)
Shingo, go practice katas.

Shingo gives Frank one last dirty look, then leaves the room. Tanaka approaches Frank, eyeing him closely. Frank is getting nervous. Tanaka bends to pick up the Katana sword.

TANAKA
So, you like sword?

FRANK
(with false bravado)
What if I do?

TANAKA
You cannot get Katana sword by steal-
ing... it very special sword.
You must earn it!

FRANK
I wasn't going to steal it.

(CONTINUED)

21C CONTINUED:

Faster than the eye can see, Tanaka swings the blade past Frank, shearing the bill clean off the boy's cap. Frank is left with a baseball "beanie" on his head. His face goes white.

TANAKA
Giants no good. Dodgers best!
(a beat)
You no flinch. Have fighting spirit.

FRANK
What are you going to do with me?

TANAKA
Take you home to parents.

FRANK
You're not gonna call the cops?

TANAKA
Not if we make deal.

FRANK
(concerned)
What kind of deal?

21D INT. DUX HOUSE - NIGHT

MR. AND MRS. DUX are seated on a sofa across from Tanaka. Frank, seated between them, does not look happy as he watches the old Japanese man warily.

TANAKA
Your son and my son are in same school. Frank see Shingo's skill, desire to learn martial science, too.

MR. DUX
(with heavy French accent)
What do you mean by martial science?

TANAKA
Frank tell me you come to America to grow vines?

MR. DUX
That's right. I work at the Vernet vineyard.

(CONTINUED)

21D CONTINUED:

TANAKA
I come to grow fish in hatchery.
(a beat)
We both grow children. You use science to make vine grow better. Like vines, children need training. Martial science provides a way of training... brings mind, body and spirit together.

MR. DUX
Frank, you really want to learn this thing from Mr. Tanaka?

Frank looks at Tanaka who is eyeing him in an almost threatening manner.

FRANK
I think it might help keep me out of trouble.

Tanaka smiles and nods to him.

TANAKA
Good. With your parent's permission we start tomorrow.

22 EXT. TANAKA HOUSE - THE NEXT DAY

Behind the house are a number of rectangular breeding pools sunk in concrete that make up Tanaka's fish hatchery. Between the pools and the house Tanaka, Shingo and Frank, all wearing ghis, stand in an area where tatami mats have been set down. Tanaka watches as Shingo repeatedly slams Frank to the mats.

TANAKA
(to Shingo in Japanese)
Maintain concentration. Don't let up!

Shingo is clearly tiring of this exercise and vents his anger on Frank, taking him down with greater force each time -- but Frank keeps springing back for more.

SHINGO
Why don't you quit, "round-eye"?

Frank says nothing and readies himself for the next attack. Feinting with his hands, Shingo spins and CRACKS Frank in the head with the heel of his foot. Frank drops to the mat like a sack of laundry.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

TANAKA
(to Shingo in Japanese)
Good combination!

He helps Frank to his feet.

TANAKA
(to Frank)
That enough for today.

FRANK
Not yet.

SHINGO
Give it up, turkey.

Without warning, Frank lands a solid kick on Shingo's chest and hammers him right off the mat. Shingo doubles over, the wind knocked out of him. Tanaka smiles.

TANAKA
(to Shingo, Japanese)
You learned something today -- never let down your guard on the mat!

Upset, Shingo stomps away.

FRANK
How come you coach him but not me?

TANAKA
I bring you here to help me train my son. You not question me.

FRANK
(pissed)
If you expect me to be his punching bag, you can forget about our deal. Call the cops, tell my parents, see if I care.

TANAKA
I teach Shingo skill, not spirit. You already have spirit. Much more important.

FRANK
Yeah, but I want the skill too.

23 INT. TANAKA'S DEN - DAY

In the middle of all the Japanese art and furniture is a regulation-size billiard table. Tanaka stands beside the table with cue stick in hand. He is addressing both Frank and Shingo in English this time. Shingo is less attentive than Frank.

TANAKA
There is no magic to be learned, only the laws of nature.

Tanaka gently hits one of the billiard balls with his cue stick. The ball rolls just as gently across the table.

TANAKA
Force depend on speed and mass. Increase speed, increase force. Increase mass, increase force even more. I add mass of hips to mass of shoulders to mass of arm.... Concentrate speed and mass for moment of impact -- snap like whip!

In the blink of an eye, he wallops the ball with a resounding CRACK! It flies across the table, hits the cushion, skips into the air and imbeds itself into the far wall.

Frank and Shingo are impressed by what they've seen. Tanaka winks at them.

TANAKA
We tell Mrs. Tanaka earthquake damage plaster.

24 INT. TANAKA'S GARAGE - NIGHT

Tanaka lights three candles which one by one provide more and more illumination to the interior. The overall effect is a bit mystical.

Frank and Shingo gather around Tanaka for another lesson. The tatami mats have been moved inside.

TANAKA
The longer your hand away from body the longer you in danger. Get hand back, into fighting stance, protect face and body. Snap fist out, snap fist back. Good punch can snuff out flame.

FRANK
By hitting the wick?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

TANAKA
By hitting air around it.

FRANK
That's impossible.

Tanaka approaches the table with the candles and moves into a fighting stance. He whips out his hand towards the first candle and snaps it back. The flame flickers and dies. Tanaka turns to Shingo and Frank.

TANAKA
Now you try.

Shingo and Frank take turns punching at the flames. Frank is the first to blow out a candle. Shingo succeeds a moment later, putting the garage in complete darkness.

TANAKA
Very good. Now please find light switch.

25 EXT. JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Books in hand, Shingo passes a group of OLDER BOYS on the way to the bike rack. When he stops at his bike he sees that both tires have been slashed. He turns to confront the Older Boys.

SHINGO
Who did this?

OLDER BOY #1
I don't know. But it <u>is</u> December 7th. Remember Pearl Harbor?

OLDER BOY #2
Do the words "sneak attack" mean anything to you?

Hitting the flashpoint, Shingo drops his books and charges the Older Boys. Before they can react, two of them are down on the ground and GROANING. The others jump Shingo and wail on him.

Leaving the school, Frank sees Shingo outnumbered. Without a moment's hesitation, Frank dumps his books and dives into the fight. Soon Shingo and Frank gain the upper hand. Bloody and bruised, the Older Boys turn tail and run.

Shingo dusts himself off and picks up his books.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

FRANK
You okay?

SHINGO
I didn't need your help.

FRANK
I know that.

Shingo extends his hand toward Frank.

SHINGO
But thanks anyway.

Frank's hand meets Shingo's and they shake.

FRANK
You shouldn't let those guys get to you like that.

SHINGO
I fight for honor. You wouldn't understand.
(fiercely)
Someday I'm going to fight in the Kumite to make my father proud of me.

Suddenly, Shingo tries to throw Frank using his extended arm for leverage -- but Frank deftly counters. Shingo breaks into a grin and slaps Frank on the back.

SHINGO
You're okay, "roundeye".

26 INT. BEDROOM - TANAKA HOUSE - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Frank pads into Tanaka's room. Tanaka is lying on a mat on the floor, his head propped up against a small pillow. He seems to be sleeping but as soon as Frank enters the room his eyes open. The vitality we've seen in him before has ebbed. Tanaka looks gravely ill.

FRANK
Are you awake, sensei?

TANAKA
You sleep with eyes open?

Frank sits cross-legged on floor beside Tanaka.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

FRANK
How are you feeling?

TANAKA
Like old man. How you feeling?

FRANK
I'm fine.

TANAKA
What brings you here?

FRANK
I'm on my way to Hong Kong.

Tanaka nods to Frank, acknowledging the subtext of Frank's statement -- he's going to the Kumite.

TANAKA
Nice of you to think of Tanaka.
(a beat)
Uncle Sam let you go to Hong Kong?

FRANK
Not exactly...

Tanaka smiles.

TANAKA
I understand. You sure you want to do this?

FRANK
There's nothing more important to me.

Tanaka is pleased.

TANAKA
The greater the challenge, the greater the man.

FRANK
We both face difficult challenges.

Tanaka places his hand over Frank's.

TANAKA
Great warriors have nothing to fear. I've poured all my knowledge into you. When you fight, you fight with my spirit. In Kumite, you will need it!

27 EXT. SKY - DAY (STOCK)

A commercial jet streaks across the clear blue sky.

28 INT. JET

Frank looks out the window as the jet begins it's descent.

STEWARDESS (ON P.A.)
We are beginning our descent into Hong Kong. The Captain has turned the no smoking sign on....

29 FRANK'S POV OUT THE WINDOW

A breathtaking view of the mountain island of Hong Kong and the settlement of the Kowloon on the mainland across from it. Victoria Peak dominates the panorama.

30 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - DAY

The Star Ferry cuts through a small flotilla of junks as it crosses from the island of Hong Kong to the Kowloon.

31 EXT. DECK OF THE STAR FERRY - DAY

Frank wanders among the other passengers on board, then enters an enclosed lounge area in the middle of the deck.

32 INT. LOUNGE

Stopping at a row of video games, Frank watches as a broad-shouldered American bruiser in his thirties, RAY JACKSON, grimaces as he rides a pair of joysticks on a game called "Karate Champ".

33 INSERT - VIDEO GAME SCREEN

Two electronic karateka face each other, bow and exchange blows. One of them decimates the other with a series of rapid front kicks to the head, exploding the opponent into a shower of electronic blips.

34 BACK TO SCENE

Jackson slips two quarters into the machine and turns to Frank.

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

JACKSON
You wanna gimme some competition?

FRANK
Sure, I'll give it a try.

JACKSON
That's what I like to hear.... a man who's not afraid to lose.

Jackson presses the button for two players and grabs the pair of joysticks on the left, Frank grabs the pair on the right as the video screen comes alive.

35 INSERT - VIDEO SCREEN

The electronic fighter on the right, Frank's "champion", lands several punches on Jackson's fighter. Jackson's man is repeatedly knocked down until he explodes in an electronic shower.

JACKSON (O.S.)
You know anything about real fighting?

FRANK (O.S)
I better. I'm here for the Kumite.

JACKSON (O.S.)
Aren't you a little young for full contact?

FRANK (O.S.)
Aren't you little old for video games?

36 MONTAGE: (SERIES OF SHOTS)

Jackson straining against the game console, twisting and contorting himself as if his body english could help his fighter defeat Frank.

Frank, calmer than Jackson, shifting his pair of joysticks into all sorts of combinations with the resultant electronic martial arts combinations taking their toll on Jackson's surrogate.

Jackson's man "explodes".

Jackson shakes his head in disbelief, then extends his hand to Frank.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

JACKSON
I'm Ray Jackson. I'm fighting in the Kumite, too.

FRANK
(shaking hands)
That's what I figured. I'm Frank Dux.

JACKSON
You staying at the Penisula?

FRANK
Yeah.

JACKSON
Why don't we share a cab there?

37 EXT. TANAKA HOUSE - NIGHT

Two men in crewcuts and suits, HELMER (45, Caucasian) and RAWLINS (30, Black) walk up to the front door and knock. Mrs. Tanaka opens the door. WE SEE the men flash I.D.s. Mrs. Tanaka nods and lets them inside.

38 INT. TANAKA HOUSE

Mrs. Tanaka leads Helmer and Rawlins to a sofa and sits across from them.

HELMER
Mrs. Tanaka, it's very important to the United States Government that we find Frank Dux. We understand that he may have visited Mr. Tanaka here recently.

MRS. TANAKA
Mr. Tanaka very sick.

HELMER
We're very sorry to hear that.
(beat)
Was Frank here recently?

MRS. TANAKA
Frank came here to pay respect.

RAWLINS
When was that?

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

MRS. TANAKA
Two days ago.

HELMER
Do you know if he was going to Hong Kong?

MRS. TANAKA
I don't know.

HELMER
Thanks for your time. We're sorry if we disturbed you.

39 EXT. PENISULA HOTEL - DAY

The crush of Hong Kong traffic creeps by. The people on bicycle make much better time than those in cars.

40 INT. LOBBY - PENINSULA HOTEL - DAY

Frank and Jackson register at the front desk.

DESK CLERK
There are messages for each of you. Mr. Lin in room 310 needs to see you as soon as you check in.

JACKSON
Who the hell is Mr. Lin?

VICTOR LIN, a fast-talking Chinese-American with a New York accent, looks up from an issue of "Black Belt" magazine. He springs from his seat.

VICTOR
I'm Lin.
(to Jackson)
You Jackson? You look like a Jackson.
(checking clipboard, then to Frank)
Lemme see ... that would make you Frank Dux (pronounces it "ducks").

FRANK
It's Dux (pronounces it "dukes").

VICTOR
Gotcha. Like "put up your dukes", right? Right!

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

Frank and Jackson exchange looks.

VICTOR
(continuing non-stop)
Okay, so here's the deal: This is the biggest Kumite ever. We got fighters from all over -- we even got a guy from goddam Greenland! I've been assigned by the I.F.A.A. to help you and the other North American fighters find your way around. I'm gonna make sure you guys get in, get it up, give it your best. You know what I mean?

41 OMIT

42 EXT. KOWLOON STREET - DAY

Victor leads Frank and Jackson through the masses of people that seem to crowd all Asian metropoli.

VICTOR (O.S.)
When the Chinese agreed to lease Hong Kong to the British they wanted to hold onto this one area -- the "Forbidden City". The Chinese kept all their official buildings there. The criminals in Hong Kong used to run in there knowing it was off limits to the British police. Sorta like the Casbah in Algiers.
(a beat)
All that's left now is the rubble and the scum -- the Chinese officials cleared out fifty years ago. The Triad, they're like the Chinese Mafia, is allowing the I.F.A.A. to hold the Kumite in the "Forbidden City" this year. They're also providing "protection". It keeps things private. No tourists, no press, no cops.

They reach the stone steps that descend to the Forbidden City of Hong Kong. Victor approaches a YOUNG TOUGH waiting for them on the steps. He's a member of the Triad. His face is covered with tattoos. He looks like someone you definitely don't want to meet in a dark Hong Kong alley, much less the Forbidden City.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

VICTOR
(in Chinese)
These are American fighters. Can you take us to the arena?

The Tough looks Jackson and Frank over. He then grins, exposing carious teeth, and gives them the "thumbs up" sign.

TOUGH
Okay, U.S.A.!

Frank nods and gives him a big smile in return.

43 EXT. FORBIDDEN CITY

He leads them down the tortuous steps and into a maze of claustrophobic alleys cutting through a shanty-town of aluminum and wood structures housing drug dealers, beggars, thieves and killers.

JACKSON
This makes South Philly look like Beverly Hills.

VICTOR
A lot of these people are refugees. To them, this is Beverly Hills.

44 EXT. KUMITE ARENA

The quartet reaches another set of steps that descend even deeper into the bowels of the Forbidden City. Two muscular bouncers, also members of the Triad, nod to Victor as he escorts Frank and Jackson into the arena.

45 INT. ARENA

A SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS, FRANK'S POV, as he surveys the Kumite for the first time:

On the fighting platform dominating the arena, different styles of fighters -- Kung Fu, Tae Kwon Do, Sumo, Kick Boxing -- spar under the watchful eyes of the I.F.A.A. referees.

On the floor, more fighters qualify for the Kumite by breaking boards, bricks and blocks with their hands, elbows, feet -- some even use their heads!

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

Elsewhere, pairs of karateka run through katas together. Other fighters practice T'ai Chi routines, stretch, shadow-box, do calisthenics.

We recognize Chong Li, Fukai, Paredes, Toon, Chuan, Morra and Gustafson among the fighters.

VICTOR
Okay, you guys, first you show the Black Dragon boys your invitation. Why anyone without one would wanna crash the party and get their face kicked in is beyond me, but those are the rules. Then you gotta qualify and prove to 'em you can step onto the runway and not get killed.

46 ANGLE ON OFFICIALS' TABLE

Frank steps up to one of the OFFICIALS checking invitations and presents him with his. The Official looks it over, looks Frank over, then taps the Official next to him, and points to Frank.

OFFICIAL
(in Japanese)
It says he is representing the Tanaka clan!
(turning to Frank)
You don't look like Tanaka.

FRANK
Senzo Tanaka trained me.

Victor steps in on Frank's behalf.

VICTOR
What's the hold-up?

OFFICIAL
This man say Senzo Tanaka his sensei!

VICTOR
What's the difference if he says Bruce Springsteen's his sensei?

OFFICIAL
Splingsteen?

JACKSON
Who's this Tanaka?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

OFFICIAL
Senzo Tanaka great warrior -- won Kumite in 1940! Then disappear! Never fight again.

FRANK
He didn't disappear. He went to America.

There is EXCITED CHATTER up and down the Officials' table.

VICTOR
(to Frank)
Okay. Someone wanna tell me what's goin' on here?

OFFICIAL
If Senzo Tanaka your sensei, then you show us "dim-mak".

Frank bows sharply to the Official, then steps over to a nearby stack of bricks.

JACKSON
What the hell is "dim-mak"?

OFFICIAL
Death touch!

Victor, amazed by all this, joins Frank by the bricks. Jackson sidles over as well.

FRANK
(to Victor)
Choose a brick.

VICTOR
(sarcastically)
Okay, right. Why don't ya break the <u>bottom</u> one?

A throng of other fighters, including Fukai, Paredes, Toon, Chuan and a Syrian martial artist named HOSSEIN form a circle around Frank, Jackson, Victor and the bricks.

FRANK
(grinning)
No problem.

VICTOR
I think you've taken one too many kicks in the head, Frank.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

Frank stands before the pile of bricks and begins to concentrate, focusing all his energy on the stack. A hush falls over the crowd as more fighters gather around to see what's going to happen. Among them is a Japanese Yakuza, HIRO SATORI, who dresses like he's seen too many Richard Gere movies -- Armani suit, dark silk tie and shirt, Rolex watch and gold tie bar.

47 CLOSE ON HIRO

as he pushes his way to the front of the crowd to get a better view.

48 ANGLE ON FRANK

as his hand begins to come down on the top brick; slowly, gently, almost in SLOW MOTION. Rather than striking the brick with great force, it seems more like a tap! Then, SMASH! The bottom brick (and only the bottom brick!) EXPLODES in all directions!

Victor, the Officials and the other Fighters are amazed. A BUZZ OF VOICES spreads through the arena. Hiro eyes Frank thoughtfully.

VICTOR
Fuck me!

OFFICIAL #1
We honor your invitation. You qualify to fight.

JACKSON
No shit he's qualified!

Frank bows to the Officials once again. As he rises, his eyes catch sight of Chong Li staring at him. Chong Li smiles at Frank. Frank gives him a warm, friendly smile back.

CHONG LI
Very good. But bricks not hit back.

49 INT. POLICE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE

The two DIA officers sit across from a POLICE CAPTAIN CHEN. Rawlins hands the Captain a photograph of Frank.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

RAWLINS
Here's a picture of the man we're looking for. His name's Frank Dux.

HELMER
We know he's here because his name appeared on the passenger manifest for a flight from San Francisco to Hong Kong two days ago.

CAPTAIN CHEN
Maybe he left already. Went somewhere else.
(trying to be funny)
Asia's a very big place.

HELMER
We suspect Frank came here for the Kumite. We're here to prevent him from fighting in it.

CAPTAIN CHEN
The Kumite? What's that?

HELMER
Don't pull on my chain, Captain. We all know about the Kumite. And we all know it's happening somewhere in Hong Kong over the next three days.

CAPTAIN CHEN
Not in my jurisdiction.

RAWLINS
Look, Captain... all we want you to do is pass his picture out to your men. If they spot Dux, give us a call at our hotel.

CAPTAIN CHEN
I wish I could help you but my men are already overworked.

HELMER
I'm sure your superiors would want you to help us. Can't we handle it at this level?

RAWLINS
But if it's too much trouble, we can always talk to our people in Washington and tell 'em we just couldn't get any cooperation from you.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED:

CHEN
(relenting)
I'll see what can be done.

RAWLINS
You know where to reach us.

50 INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - BAR - NIGHT

A waiter brings Frank and Jackson their drinks -- Jackson a bottle of Tsing-Tao beer, Frank a bottle of mineral water Jackson takes a swig, looks around, and points someone out to Frank.

JACKSON
See the guy with the woman over there... that's Sadiq Hossein. He and his buddies are cops in Damascus .... mean motherfucks.

51 ANGLE AT THE BAR

SADIQ HOSSEIN, an ugly brute with a broken hook nose and a gold incisor, and four other SYRIAN FIGHTERS are trying to entertain Janice Duren, the reporter we met earlier.

JACKSON (O.S.)
(continuing)
Hossein got to the quarterfinals last Kumite -- watch out for him if you face him. He likes to kick you in the balls, then drive his knee into your face.

52 ANGLE ON FRANK AND JACKSON

FRANK
At least he's got good taste in women.

JACKSON
If you wanna get through this with all your teeth in your head, you better keep your mind on fighting and leave the women alone.

Frank ignores Jackson's remark, keeps his eyes on Janice.

53 ANGLE ON JANICE AND THE SYRIANS

Hossein slides his arm around Janice's waist. She pushes it away. He clamps onto her hand and immobilizes it. The other Syrians laugh as a look of rage shoots into Janice's eyes.

Hossein
You come upstairs with me now....
for interview.

Hossein's buddies laugh again.

JANICE
Like hell I do. Let go of me!

Hossein
You want Hossein, no?

JANICE
No. Hossein is asshole!

HOSSEIN
What did you call me?

JANICE
You want me to spell it out?

Hossein tightens his grip, squeezing a wince out of Janice. He raises his other hand to strike her when:

A HAND SLICES INTO FRAME and seizes Hossein's hand. Hossein releases Janice and turns to face Frank.

FRANK
It's A-S-S-H-O-L-E. Now leave
her alone.

HOSSEIN
You just make a big mistake.

The other Syrians group around Hossein, then Hossein recognizes Frank.

HOSSEIN
You're the American shit-head who
does tricks with bricks. No?

Jackson steps beside Frank. The odds are five to two.

JACKSON
Looks like the Kumite starts a day
early this year.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

Janice jumps between all of them.

JANICE
Why don't you macho jerks just cool out.

HOSSEIN
(to Frank)
She's coming upstairs with me.

FRANK
Look, we can fight over her and both of us would be thrown out of the Kumite. Is she really worth it?

Janice gives him a shocked look.

FRANK
(continuing)
Or we could settle this another way.
(a beat)
Does Allah let you boys gamble?

HOSSEIN
What is bet?

FRANK
You hold a coin in the palm of your hand. If I can grab it before you close your hand I get the girl. If I can't, she's yours.

Hossein grins, his gold tooth glistening in the light.

HOSSEIN
Okay. We make bet!

JANICE
(outraged)
You can't do that!

FRANK
You didn't want us to fight... so relax.

Frank winks at her. He pulls an American quarter from his pocket.

FRANK
(to Hossein)
Here, hold the coin in your hand.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

Frank places the coin in the center of Hossein's outstretched palm. Janice tries to leave. Hossein's friends block her way.

FRANK
(continuing)
Say "go" when you're ready.

JACKSON
What the hell are you doin', Frankie?

FRANK
Just watch ...

Frank locks eyes with Hossein. Janice watches anxiously.

FRANK
Ready when you are.

HOSSEIN
Go.

Without shifting his eyes from Hossein's, Frank whips his hand across Hossein's palm as Hossein's hand snaps shut.

HOSSEIN
Hah! You lose, asshole!

It's evident to everyone there (except Frank) that Frank has lost. Frank stands there, completely calm. He catches Janice's eye and gives her a wink.

Hossein opens his hand. Seeing the coin in his palm, the Syrians LAUGH. Janice almost passes out. But Hossein says nothing. On closer inspection, everyone sees that it's a Chinese coin, not the quarter Frank gave him. Frank opens his hand and displays the quarter.

FRANK
Looks like she's mine. From now on, leave her alone.

HOSSEIN
I'll settle with you on the Kumite runway.

JANICE
(to Jackson, astonished)
How'd he do that?

JACKSON
Beats the hell out of me.

54 EXT. KOWLOON - HARBOR - NIGHT

A spellbinding evening, the harbor bathed in silver moonlight. Frank and Janice stroll along the waterfront.

JANICE
What made you do that back there?

FRANK
You looked like you were in trouble.

JANICE
But you don't even know me.

FRANK
So it was a good way to meet, don't you think?

He gives her a wink and a smile.

JANICE
I can think of better ways...

FRANK
Why were you with Hossein?

JANICE
I was trying to get a story about the Kumite. I'm a reporter.

FRANK
So, did he tell you anything?

JANICE
Yeah, he said I had nice legs.

Frank checks her out.

FRANK
(with a smile)
Well, he's right about that.

JANICE
(frustrated)
Why is it that no one wants to talk about the Kumite? There's this whole air of mystery about it. I want to know what it's all about.
(a beat)
Why are <u>you</u> fighting in it?

FRANK
Personal reasons.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

JANICE
(sarcastic)
Let me guess -- you have to prove your manhood to the world.

FRANK
If you know so much about it, why do you want to interview anyone? Just write your article.

JANICE
If someone would at least talk to me about it, I wouldn't have to guess.

Frank stops walking and looks at Janice.

FRANK
The Kumite is for the fighters -- not for the people who read newspapers. It's a pure martial arts event.

JANICE
I've heard that it's unnecessarily brutal. Like a cockfight, except it's with people.

FRANK
That's not what it's like.

JANICE
Then correct me.

FRANK
Okay, I'll talk to you.... but on one condition.

JANICE
And what's that?

FRANK
You agree to have dinner with me tomorrow night.

JANICE
Actually ... I was hoping Hossein would be free.

55 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

They share a laugh as they reach the front entrance to Janice's apartment house.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

JANICE
This is it. You want to come up?

FRANK
I'd like to, but....

JANICE
(joking)
I get it. Code of the warrior, right? You have to prepare for battle.

FRANK
What about tomorrow night?

Janice can't help being charmed by Frank.

JANICE
I'll make dinner for you. Be here at eight.

Frank gives her a friendly kiss on the cheek.

56 INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - FRANK'S ROOM - MORNING

Frank does the "Nine Hands Cutting" with his eyes closed, and his body suspended between two chairs. His legs, spread-eagled in a split position, support him as an ankle rests on each chair and his butt practically touches the floor.

There is a KNOCK at the door but Frank doesn't respond. Jackson pushes the door open.

JACKSON
Anybody home?

He sees Frank balancing on the two chairs.

JACKSON
Oowwww! That hurts just lookin' at it.

Still no response from Frank.

JACKSON
Yo, Frankie, this is ground control. Do you copy?

He CLAPS his hands together.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

JACKSON
Time to change channels, kid.

FRANK
(instantly "there")
What's the matter?

JACKSON
It's time to get ready!

FRANK
That's what I was doing.

Victor pops his head into the room.

VICTOR
Wake up call!

He sees Frank "sitting" between the two chairs and reacts.

VICTOR
Whoa, Frank... careful. You might wanna have kids some day.
(a beat)
Okay. The "Kumite Express" leaves in five minutes.

57 INT. KUMITE ARENA - DAY

The cavern beneath the Forbidden City is jammed with people -- SPECTATORS, OFFICIALS and, of course, the FIGHTERS from all over the world. Several different groups of Chinese GYMNASTS, wearing worn but colorful outfits, perform "Wu Shu", a spectacular form of Oriental acrobatics, on the fighting platform.

Victor leads his contingent of a dozen or so North American fighters including Frank and Jackson into the arena.

JACKSON
This is it, kid. Showtime! You can practically <u>smell</u> the adrenaline.

A group of ASIAN SPECTATORS jeer the North Americans as they pass through.

FRANK
Hey, Jackson -- that your fan club?

JACKSON
They <u>love</u> me over here!

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

VICTOR
Don't take it personal, guys. They just don't like anyone who isn't Asian... and good-looking.

The Gymnasts finish their performance and leave the platforms. Then the crowd falls silent as MR. OSHIMA, the head of the Black Dragon Society, makes his way to the judges' stand.

Oshima, an elderly Japanese with white hair, is magnificently attired in an ornate ceremonial robe which is embroidered with Black Dragon motifs. He steps up to a microphone and begins to address the Kumite gathering.

OSHIMA
Welcome, warriors of the world. Today you become part of a tradition that began hundreds of years ago. The Kumite was first used by the Kokuryukai -- "The Black Dragon Society" -- to measure the fighting skills and spirit of its members. Every five years the best fighters in its ranks would face each other in full contact -- with one winner emerging as the superior warrior -- the champion.

58 CLOSE ON FRANK

As Oshima speaks Frank surveys the competition -- Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Indonesians, Europeans -- the greatest martial artists in the world.

OSHIMA
(continuing)
It was an opportunity to judge the age-old argument of which school of fighting was best -- karate or kung fu, jujitsu or tae kwon do, pencak-silat or tang soo do. In recent years, the Kumite has evolved into something even greater. The Kokuryukai has been joined by the International Fighting Arts Association as co-sponsors for the event and as guardians of a rich and colorful heritage. After three days of Kumite, one fighter will prove himself to be best. May the mightiest warrior prevail!

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

Oshima leaves the judges' platform to the accompaniment of CHEERS and APPLAUSE -- and we sense the excitement building as the Fighters begin to warm up for their bouts.

59 CLOSE ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

The names "Yasuda" and "Gustafson" flash on, announcing the fighters in the first bout.

60 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

full of anticipation. BOOKMAKERS stroll through the arena like peanut vendors trying to bring some semblance of organization to the gambling. They mark small red or gold-colored chits with ink stamps and hand them to the bettors in exchange for the indicated wager. Nearly everyone is betting on the fight.

61 YASUDA

a short Japanese Karateka, mounts the platform wearing a ghi with a red sash. The predominantly Oriental crowd APPLAUDS him enthusiastically.

62 GUSTAFSON

mounts the fighting platform from the other side. He wears a gold sash around his ghi. There is no applause for him.

63 ANGLE ON NORTH AMERICAN BENCH

Frank, Jackson and Victor sit with several other North American fighters, all eyes on the platform.

VICTOR
(to Frank)
Now remember -- it's full contact. Anything goes but one thing -- no eye gouging.
(a beat)
There're three ways to win. One, you knock the other guy out. Two, your opponent quits and shouts "Mat-te!" It's like saying "uncle". Three, you throw the fucker right off the runway. That's all there is to it.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

JACKSON
If it's so easy, how come you don't give it a shot?

VICTOR
You kidding me? You gotta be nuts to go up there!

64 ON THE FIGHTING PLATFORM

a REFEREE-JUDGE stands between the two fighters, his arm raised in the air. He suddenly drops his arm and shouts:

JUDGE
Hajemai!

And the fight is on! The crowd CHEERS fanatically.

Yasuda, wasting no time, gets a fast kick into Gustafson's groin, doubling him over. But the Swede recovers almost instantly and counters with a devasting elbow jab, knocking Yasuda to the edge of the platform. The crowd is quiet as Yasuda teeters then regains his balance.

The two fighters circle each other. With cat-like speed and agility, Gufstafson handsprings forward and clobbers Yasuda on the chin with both of his heels. Blood spurts from Yasuda's nose and covers his ghi!

Gustafson goes for the kill, but Yasuda is ready for him and delivers a jarring roundhouse kick to the Swede's head. Yasuda follows with a punishing heel smash to the lower part of Gustafson's back. The crowd ROARS!

65 JACKSON AND FRANK

study Yasuda's technique intently.

FRANK
He knows what he's doing. He got him right in the kidney.

JACKSON
That's why they call this thing a "bloodsport".

66 ON THE PLATFORM

Gustafson is starting to waver. A red splotch spreads on the back of his ghi where Yasuda kicked him. Smelling imminent victory, Yasuda knee-kicks Gustafson in the chest, knocking the wind out of him. Dazed and defenseless, the Swede wobbles towards the edge of the platform. The crowd SCREAMS for Yasuda to finish him off. Yasuda gladly obliges, sweeping Gustafson off the platform with a powerful hook kick.

A FLAGMAN rushes onto the platform waving a red flag to indicate that the fighter wearing the red sash has won the bout.

67 IN THE CROWD

The Japanese spectators love it, go berserk! Near the edge of the platform, medics roll Gufstason's limp frame onto a litter and hustle him through the mob.

68 ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

Yasuda's name lights up, as well as the time it took for him to eliminate his opponent -- 1 minute, 28 seconds.

69 A JANITOR

mops the blood and sweat off the platform then disappears, clearing the way for another bout.

70 CLOSE ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

announcing another pair of fighters: Jackson and COTARD.

71 CLOSE ON JACKSON AND FRANK

as Jackson ties a gold sash around his waist.

JACKSON
Watch me, Frankie. I'll show you how it's done.

72 CLOSE ON COTARD

a fierce-looking Frenchman -- an expert in savate. He ties a red sash around his ghi, does a few deep knee bends to warm up, then mounts the platform.

73 JACKSON

comes onto the platform with his fists raised over his head like a prize fighter. He's greeted by a round of BOOS from the definitely hostile crowd. Now they get a chance to watch two Westerners tear each other apart -- it doesn't matter who wins this bout.

74 WIDE ON THE PLATFORM

Jackson and Cotard exchange bows. Jackson then turns to where Frank is seated and gives him the "thumbs up" sign. Cotard looks Jackson in the eye and smacks his fist into his palm, a signal to Jackson that anything goes. Jackson responds with the "jerk-me-off" gesture.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Cotard moves in right away with a flurry of kicks which Jackson dodges. Bobbing on his feet and circling the ring like a heavyweight, Jackson frustrates the Frenchman by keeping just out of the range of his kicks. The crowd JEERS at Jackson, growing as frustrated as Cotard.

As Cotard falls into Jackson's rhythm, Jackson suddenly comes alive with jabs and punches to Cotard's head and stomach -- and he's too close to the Frenchman for Cotard to use his front kicks to fight back effectively. Cotard is forced to backpedal to get away from him.

Then, to the surprise of everyone -- especially Cotard -- Jackson unleashes a spinning kick which sends Cotard reeling. Jackson pursues him across the fighting platform, pummelling him with powerful blows. The coup de grace is a devastating uppercut which knocks Cotard flat on his ass, out cold! It's over for Cotard - finit!

Jackson raises his hands over his head and performs a victory dance across the platform before leaping off and landing beside Frank and Victor. Jackson slaps their palms.

JACKSON
(with a big smile)
Check it out!

FRANK
Not bad... what took you so long?

75 THE FLAGMAN

waves the gold-colored flag.

76 THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

announces Jackson the winner. The time indicated is 2 minutes, 13 seconds. The information disappears, replaced by the names of the next two opponents -- Chuan and Chong Li.

77 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

CHEERING, the excitement level rising as Chong Li and his Trainer approach the platform.

78 ANGLE ON FRANK, JACKSON AND VICTOR

FRANK
What's going on?

JACKSON
(pointing to Chong Li)
That's Chong Li -- the current champ.

VICTOR
He's never been defeated. Holds all sorts of records, including the fastest kayo. He even killed a guy during the last Kumite.

JACKSON
Yeah... he kicked the poor bastard in the throat. The guy choked to death on the platform. Chong Li just stood there and watched.

Frank turns towards the platform as Chong Li moves into position.

79 ANGLE ON THE PLATFORM

as Chong Li wraps his red sash around his waist. He is the perfect picture of arrogance. Chuan, his opponent, bows to him. Chong Li does not return the bow.

Chuan looks apprehensive as he slides his feet into a fighting stance.

80 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

hoisting red chits into the air, waving them in support of the preordained winner. The bookmakers move through the crowd, CHATTERING IN A HALF-DOZEN ORIENTAL LANGUAGES, trying to drum up bets against Chong Li by offering higher and higher odds. There are few takers.

81 ON THE PLATFORM

The judge steps forward.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Chong Li starts his charge before the last syllable is even completed. Two steps forward combined with an incredible body spin put Chong Li's left foot firmly into Chuan's face, breaking his nose and driving the Chinese backward and off the platform. End of bout!

82 THE SPECTATORS

go crazy, especially the Koreans. They start CHANTING Chong Li's name.

83 ANGLE ON THE NORTH AMERICAN BENCH

Frank watches Chong Li leave the platform.

FRANK
He has powerful legs.

VICTOR
Chong Li has powerful everything!

84 THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

flashes "NEW WORLD RECORD -- 7.4 seconds".

85 CLOSE ON A BOOKIE IN THE CROWD

waving a handful of gold-colored chits in one hand, red in the other. No one's interested in the gold but the red are selling like heroin.

86 THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

Next to Frank's name, a small gold light. Next to the name of his opponent, Abduh, a red light.

87 ANGLE ON FRANK, VICTOR AND JACKSON

Frank sits on the bench concentrating as his hands form the "nine hands cutting". Jackson and Victor pep him.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

JACKSON
Don't let him near your nuts, Frankie. These guys like to go for the gonads.

VICTOR
Piece of cake, Dux. And if you go down, hey -- you gave it a shot. Right?

Ignoring them, Frank completes the meditation.

88 ANGLE ON SYRIAN BENCH

Several Syrians, including Hossein and ABDUH, argue with one of the Judges. Abduh points repeatedly to his leg, then walks to the platform and back with an exaggerated limp.

89 ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

Abduh's name disappears. Hossein's replaces it.

90 ANGLE ON FRANK, VICTOR AND JACKSON

Frank stands, ready to fight.

JACKSON
That camel-fucker Hossein really has a hard-on for you, Frankie. He subbed himself for Abduh.

Frank tightens his sash.

JACKSON
Yo, Frank?

Frank moves towards the platform, tuning everything out but his opponent.

Jackson waves a handful of gold-colored chits.

JACKSON
I got money riding on this one, kid! Don't let me down!

91 CLOSE ON HIRO

As the Yakuza moves towards the fighting platform, stuffing a wad of gold-colored chits into his coat pocket. Hiro is also betting on Frank!

92 ON THE PLATFORM

Frank kneels on the mat, hands extended in front of him on the canvas forming a triangle. He bows, touching his forehead to his hands. He rises to his feet, locks eyes with Hossein, and bows to his opponent.

Hossein refuses to bow to Frank. He grins menacingly, exposing his gold tooth.

HOSSEIN
Now I show you some trick or two.

Keeping his eyes on Hossein, Frank slams his fist into his open palm.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Hossein immediately fakes a jab to Frank's head, then shoots a front kick towards Frank's groin. Frank catches the leg and jerks it upward, flipping the Syrian into the air.

93 IN SLOW MOTION

As Hossein falls to the mat, Frank drives an open-hand smash to his face. Hossein drops to the platform like a sack of fertilizer -- end of match!

94 JACKSON AND VICTOR

can't believe what they've just seen. Jackson is crazed, his arms raised over his head as if he had just won. He directs Victor's attention to the scoreboard.

95 CLOSE ON THE SCOREBOARD

Frank's name is flashing. The knockdown time is 6.1 seconds -- he's broken Chong Li's kayo record!

96 ANGLE ON JACKSON AND VICTOR

Jackson is jumping up and down like someone about to pee in his pants.

JACKSON
He broke the record! His first bout in the Kumite and he broke the fuckin' record!

97 ON THE PLATFORM

Frank moves past Hossein's unconcious form. Blood seeps out of the Syrian's mouth.

FRANK
Good trick....

Frank spots something on the mat a few feet away. It's Hossein's gold incisor! Frank picks it up and kneels beside Hossein. He opens Hossein's mouth and deposits the tooth inside.

98 THE CROWD

is at first stunned. Then it erupts in a cacophany of EXCITED AND BEWILDERED CHATTER -- it happened so fast no one is really sure what happened.

99 CLOSE ON HIRO

exchanging his wad of gold-colored chits for an even larger wad of money.

100 CHONG LI

pissed, turns away from the scoreboard.

101 ON THE PLATFORM

Hossein's body is hoisted onto a stretcher and taken off by medics. The janitor returns to prepare the platform for the next fight.

102 MONTAGE: (FIRST DAY OF KUMITE)

Pounding ROCK MUSIC kicks in as: the competition continues -- WE FOLLOW Frank, Chong Li, Jackson, Yasuda as they move through the grueling field of Kumite participants.

Other fighters we've seen before also catch our eye: Fukai, the Sumo; Paredes, the Kampalo master; Toon, Chuan's buddy; and Morra.

Fukai defeats his opponents with brute force -- once he gets them in his grip he literally crushes the breath out of them. Paredes uses his "knife-hands", lacerating his opponents into submission. Toon uses his elbows and knees to inflict damage on those who face him.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

Two fighters we haven't seen before make an impressive showing: a kick boxer named Luu and a karateka named Prang.

Fists are thrown. Kicks are blocked. Elbows smash into guts. Fingers are jabbed into throats. Knees into jaws. Teeth are smashed, noses are broken. Bloodied fighters are kayoed or sent flying off the platform. Others scream "mat-te" when they've had enough.

Frank is in peak form, dispatching his opponents with grace, power and speed. Each time he wins, Hiro cashes in his gold-colored chits. By the end of the first day of the Kumite, his pockets are stuffed with his winnings. Chong Li and his Trainer observe Frank with growing concern.

103 INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

An oily piece of boiled eel plops onto Helmer's lap as he wrangles with a pair of chopsticks. Rawlins is having just as much trouble with his order of fried noodles.

RAWLINS
I really love this stuff. How's your eel?

HELMER
I don't know. I haven't tasted any yet. But next time I'll ask 'em to kill it before they serve it.

104 ANGLE ON THE RESTAURANT ENTRANCE

The Hong Kong Police Captain enters, spots Rawlins and Helmer, and proceeds to their table.

CAPTAIN CHEN
You should ask for forks.

Helmer and Rawlins look up. A noodle slips onto Rawlin's shirt.

HELMER
Captain Chen ... you eat here often?

CAPTAIN CHEN
I never eat here.
(he gives their plates a sour look)
I found some information for you.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED:

RAWLINS
Let's have it.

CAPTAIN CHEN
Dux is at the Pennisula Hotel in Kowloon.

Helmer and Rawlins drop their chopsticks and scramble out of their chairs.

HELMER
(as they rush out)
Thanks. Have some eel.

105 INT. PENINSULA HOTEL - BAR - NIGHT

Frank, looking sharp for his dinner date with Janice, is having a drink with Jackson. Once again, Jackson downs beer while Frank sticks to mineral water.

Jackson CLINKS his glass against Frank's.

JACKSON
Here's to day two, Frankie! I just hope I don't have to eliminate you tomorrow.

FRANK
If you do, promise me you'll make it quick and painless.

Jackson and Frank share the laugh. Jackson waves an empty pitcher at a passing waiter.

JACKSON
Hey, can we get another one of these?

FRANK
Take it easy, Ray. They're going to run out.

JACKSON
Lighten up, kid. I'm on vacation. I'm having a good time.
(shouting at the waiter)
Yo! Let's have another beer over here!
(a beat)
So tell me, Frankie, how come you're representing this guy Tanaka's clan?

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

FRANK
It was a twist of fate. It should've been Tanaka's son.

JACKSON
What happened?

FRANK
Tanaka is a Koga-Yambushi Ninja. He was preparing his son for initiation into the clan. I was training with Shingo, kind of like a sparring partner.

JACKSON
So you whipped his ass?

FRANK
(after a pause)
He was killed in a car accident. Tanaka was devastated.

106 INT. TANAKA HOUSE - NIGHT (FOUR YEARS EARLIER)

Tanaka kneels in front of a prayer altar wreathed with chrysanthemums. A picture of a teen-aged Shingo is cradled in the flowers. Black ribbon twines around the picture frame. A small ornamental urn, presumably containing Shingo's ashes, rests on a mantle above the altar. Incense burns in a small ceramic dish at the base of the altar.

Frank eases into the room and kneels beside Tanaka. He bows respectfully to the altar. Tanaka does not divert his eyes from Shingo's picture. (Tanaka and Frank keep their eyes on the photo through most of the scene.)

FRANK
Sensei...

Tanaka doesn't acknowledge Frank.

FRANK
I feel like I've lost part of my family too. Shingo and I were close friends ... like brothers. And you and Mrs. Tanaka ... have treated me like a son ...

Still no response from Tanaka.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

FRANK
What will happen now?

TANAKA
No more training. Tanaka stop.

FRANK
But you have so much to teach.

TANAKA
You not understand. In war, I lose first family -- son, daughter, wife. They live in Hiroshima.

Frank looks at Tanaka, stunned -- he didn't know about Tanaka's other family.

TANAKA
I leave Japan because of war -- war wrong. Come here to start over. I begin new family -- have son. Another chance to pass on teaching. For two thousand year, my family Koga-Yambushi Ninja. Knowledge pass father-son, father-son. When Shingo die, it stop.

Frank doesn't know what to say to ease Tanaka's grief. The Katana sword gracing the wall above the altar catches Frank's eye.

FRANK
Teach me what you were going to teach Shingo.

Tanaka looks at him now. (For the first time in the scene.)

TANAKA
(angry)
You cannot be Ninja!

FRANK
Why not?

TANAKA
You not Japanese! You not Tanaka!

FRANK
You taught me to fight using any technique that works ... never to limit myself to one style ... to keep an open mind ...

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

Tanaka looks into Frank's eyes. Frank stares back. There is a tense moment. Tanaka bows to Frank, acknowledging that Frank has learned well.

TANAKA
Why do you want to become Ninja?

FRANK
To honor sensei.

TANAKA
The road to become Ninja is most difficult you will ever travel. Full of pain... once you start, there is no turning back.

Frank nods.

107 EXT. TANAKA'S HOUSE - DAY

(This begins the "Ninja training" sequence which should be done as a fast-paced, energetic montage.)

Tanaka is working Frank over on the tatami mats. Despite Tanaka's age, he punishes Frank with repeated blows. Tanaka has taken off the "kid gloves" -- and Frank goes down time and time again, bloody and bruised. By comparison, Frank's attacks seem inept and feckless.

108 CLOSE ON AN ANATOMICAL CHART

as Tanaka points outs the vital points of the body -- strengths, weaknesses, the areas most vulnerable to attack.

109 ON THE TATAMI MATS

Frank executes blows and kicks to strategic points of Tanaka's body -- the neck, temple, knees -- but Tanaka fends them off deftly.

110 EXT. BREEDING POOLS - DAY

Frank stands next to Tanaka in one of Tanaka's pools, the water up to their necks.

111 ANGLE FROM UNDERWATER

Frank's arms and legs churn against the resistance of the water, scattering fish as he practices katas.

112 ON THE TATAMI MATS

Frank begins to hold his own against Tanaka, blocking some of his blows and landing a solid hit here and there.

113 EXT. TANAKA'S HOUSE -- ROOF -- DAY

Frank struggles to maintain his balance on the steep pitch of the roof as Tanaka attacks. Once again, Frank is bloodied and bruised.

114 INT. TANAKA HOUSE - DAY

Tanaka teaches Frank the "Nine Hands Cutting" meditation.

TANAKA
Practice until you can meditate and feel nothing.

115 EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Tanaka charges Frank on the slippery roof. Frank blocks the attack and counters without losing his balance.

116 EXT. BREEDING POOLS - DAY

Frank, again neck-deep in water, attempts to catch a fish with his bare hands. His first efforts are futile. Tanaka then demonstrates how easy the fish-catching challenge really is.

117 SERIES OF SHOTS

of Frank failing time after time. He concentrates harder, focusing all his attention, but he still can't do it.

Tanaka demonstrates it for him again. Frank practices into the night until <u>finally</u> he pulls his hands out of the water grasping a fish.

118 INT. TANAKA HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

CLOSE ON FRANK'S HANDS as he sharpens a sushi knife against a whetstone. PULLING BACK we see that Frank is blindfolded. He begins preparing dinner using his other senses to identify the various pieces of fish he's slicing.

119 INT. DINING ROOM

Frank, still blindfolded, carefully maneuvers around the the dining table as he serves the Tanakas their dinner. By listening very carefully, Frank is able to differentiate the BREATHING of Tanaka from his wife. Frank finds his own chair and joins them in the meal he's made.

120 EXT. TANAKA HOUSE - DAY

Frank, seated in a lotus position on a tatami mat, performs the "nine hands cutting". Tanaka sneaks up from behind carrying a wooden paddle. Without warning Tanaka whacks Frank across the back. Frank, deep in his meditative trance, doesn't even flinch.

121 EXT. TANAKA HOUSE - ROOF - DAY

Putting all the elements of Frank's training together -- Frank and Tanaka fight atop the sloping roof. A driving rain makes the roof even more slippery. Frank, blindfolded, parries Tanaka's blows and levies his own with incredible speed and power, almost knocking Tanaka off the roof.

122 CLOSE ON A JAPANESE CEREMONIAL MASK

with a hideous gargoyle-like grin. CAMERA PANS to another mask, and another -- down a line of them, each one unique in its grotesque expression.

123 EXT. CAVE - DAY

Four NINJA ELDERS from various clans stand in a semi-circle around Frank and Tanaka. Besides their masks, the Elders wear exotic ceremonial robes. Tanaka is dressed similarly. Frank is wearing a ceremonial ghi.

One of the Elders steps forward to address Frank.

ELDER #1
Tanaka say same spirit that live in his heart live in you. He call you his son... say you worthy to face this challenge.
(a beat)
No outsider ever stand where you stand. We come from Japan to honor Tanaka ... find out if "round-eye" worthy to be called Ninja.

124 EXT. GROVE OF TREES NEAR THE CAVE - DAY

Frank's arms and legs are lashed to two young trees that are bent and bound together. One of the Elders cuts the rope binding the trees -- they spring apart, nearly ripping Frank's legs and arms out of their sockets.

Suspended between the two trees, Frank endures the pain tearing at his joints. We know the pain must be unbearable, but Frank's expression reveals nothing, only a fierce determination not to succumb. His challenge is to draw the trees together again. With incredible strength he inches the two trees back into position.

125 EXT. CAVE -- DUSK

The Elders assemble outside the mouth of the cave. Tanaka approaches Frank who is also standing near the entrance to the cave.

TANAKA
You enter cave and find what I have hidden there. You bring back to me.

Frank and Tanaka exchange bows, then Frank enters the cave.

126 INT. CAVE

Pitch black perforated by scant spears of light from above. We barely perceive Frank in the darkness as he moves forward -- cautious, alert, ready for anything. He HEARS a low, inhuman BREATHING SOUND and freezes, peering into the hidden depths of the cave.

127 FRANK'S POV

A dark, massive shape moves -- a menacing shadow cleaving from the vaster shadow of the cave.

128 FRANK

moves along the cave wall, feeling with his hands as he goes. Across the cave the shape GRUNTS, then charges at Frank.

129 THE BEAST'S SHADOW

collides with Frank's in the dimness of the cave. All we can see are glimmers of the action -- a hulking form moving through the frame, a glint of light in the beast's eyes, the sweat on Frank's forearm, a horn, Frank's hand smashing down .... the SOUND OF THE FIGHT is terrifying!

Then there's stillness.

130 EXT. CAVE - NIGHT

The Elders and Tanaka sit outside the mouth of the cave, awaiting the outcome of the final test. Tanaka rises when Frank emerges carrying something -- a golden Katana sword.

Tanaka bows to Frank as the Elders rise to their feet. Frank's ghi is smeared with blood, but the Katana sword is bloodless.

TANAKA
No blood on sword ...

FRANK
I didn't need it.

The Elders stare at Frank's bloody hand. Tanaka faces them, proud as a parent.

TANAKA
Not bad for "round-eye".

The Elders, still wearing their masks, look at one another, then bow to Frank.

131 EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

A blazing bonfire lights up the clearing. One by one, the Elders remove their masks. Frank, wearing a black Shinobi outfit, steps into the firelight.

Tanaka moves beside him, eyes alight, carrying the gold Katana sword. As he presents the sword to Frank, Frank begins reciting the Ninja oath:

FRANK
I am Ninja, my magic is in the way of training...

Tanaka bows to him.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

FRANK
(continuing, very deliberately)
I am Ninja, my body always in control. My strength is adaptability. My secret is taking every opportunity with fullness.
(a beat)
I am Ninja, my laws are self-reliance. My enemy is carelessness. My strategy, my way is without want or desire. I am nothing for myself and I am everything for myself.
(a beat)
My way is Ninjitsu -- I am Ninja.

132 INT. BAR - NIGHT

Jackson, sitting across the table from Frank, shakes his head with amazement.

JACKSON
You're telling me you're a goddam Ninja?

Frank nods.

JACKSON
Man, I love these Kumite events! You never know what you're gonna go up against.

133 REVERSE ANGLE

Helmer and Rawlins come up behind Frank.

HELMER
Okay, Dux. You know why we're here.

Frank stands and faces them.

RAWLINS
We're taking you back.

FRANK
I'll go back when the Kumite's over.

Jackson rises to his feet.

JACKSON
Who the hell are these geeks, Frankie?

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

RAWLINS
Stay out of it, pal.

JACKSON
Don't call me pal, dick-face!

HELMER
Look, Frank, the Government has invested a lot of time and money in you. Colonel Cooke can't afford to let you get hurt.

FRANK
I won't get hurt.

HELMER
We're here to make sure of that. Don't make it tough on us.

FRANK
Don't make it tough on yourselves. I'll be at the airport in two days.

RAWLINS
Not good enough. We're taking you <u>now</u>.

Helmer and Rawlins draw tasers from their coats and aim them at Frank. Frank leaps up and double front-kicks the tasers out of their hands! While Jackson charges them like a crazed linebacker and sacks them, Frank dashes through the lobby.

134 EXT. PENINSULA HOTEL - NIGHT

Frank bursts out onto the sidewalk.

135 INT. HOTEL LOBBY

Helmer breaks free of Jackson's grasp and takes off after Frank.

Rawlins retrieves his taser and trains it on Jackson. He fires it at a nearby table, BLASTING it with 50,000 volts.

RAWLINS
You wanna shit sparks?

Jackson contemplates the scorched tabletop. Rawlins takes off after Helmer and Frank.

136 EXT. KOWLOON SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Frank dodges through the heavy pedestrian traffic about fifty paces ahead of Helmer. He ducks down an alley.

137 HELMER

heads down the alley after Frank.

138 FRANK

breaks out of the alley into a waterfront area.

139 EXT. WATERFRONT - "SAMPAN CITY" - NIGHT

Hundreds of sampans fill an inlet, literally covering the water from shore to shore. Frank checks behind him.

140 FRANK'S POV

Helmer hurtles towards him, with Rawlins not far behind.

141 FRANK

sprints to the edge of the water and nimbly leaps onto a sampan, landing next to a Chinese family cooking fish in a firepot. He smiles at them, then gingerly hops over to the neighboring boat.

142 HELMER AND RAWLINS

stop at the shoreline and watch Frank bound from sampan to sampan. They follow, CRASHING onto the first sampan and knocking over the family's firepot. The family SCOLDS them in Chinese.

143 EXT. "SAMPAN CITY" - NIGHT

Frank barely rocks the sampans as he moves across the bridge of boats to the opposite shore.

Behind him, Helmer and Rawlins leave a wake of bobbing boats and angry Chinese families as they clumsily try to follow Frank's trail.

144 RAWLINS

trip~~s~~, pitching into a family of Chinese eating their dinner. They engulf him, shaking their chopsticks at him as he disengages his face from a bowl of eel.

145 HELMER

helps Rawlins to his feet and they mush on.

146 FRANK

reaches the opposite shore and hails a pedicab. He hops in and looks behind as the driver starts to pedal away.

147 HELMER AND RAWLINS

scramble to catch up, but it's a hopeless cause. Helmer misjudges the distance between sampans and teeters on the prow where he lands. Rawlins THUDS onto the deck next to him, rocking Helmer into the water. The water SPLASHES a group of Chinese on board who JEER at the two Americans.

148 INT. JANICE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Low light, Janice and Frank sitting at a small table eating dinner, MUSIC on the stereo -- a potentially romantic evening. Frank is recounting the first day of the Kumite.

FRANK
The easiest guys to beat are the judo-kas. They just don't have the offensive moves. The toughest are the sumos.

Janice laughs -- the idea seems ludicrous to her.

JANICE
But they're so fat!

FRANK
That's right -- fat and strong! And if they ever get their arms around you, it's all over.

JANICE
It must be interesting -- all those different fighters in the same competition.

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

FRANK
It is. There're some styles I've never even seen before.

JANICE
Like what?

FRANK
There's a kampalo master who fights to samba music. You really have to see it to believe it.

JANICE
I'm waiting for an invitation.

FRANK
Look, Janice ...

JANICE
I want you to get me in, Frank. I want the story. It means a lot to me.

FRANK
It's impossible. There're strict rules. The press isn't allowed in.

JANICE
(seductively)
I bet we could figure something out if we put our heads together.

FRANK
Forget it.

JANICE
(slyly)
You're telling me you never break the rules?

Frank smiles at her.

FRANK
What are you getting at?

JANICE
Who are Helmer and Rawlins?

FRANK
Just friends. What do you know about them?

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

JANICE
They must be very close friends. They've been inquiring about you all over Hong Kong.

FRANK
(surprised)
How the...

JANICE
I'm a very good reporter and I have my connections.

FRANK
So you're planning to blackmail me into helping you get into the Kumite?

JANICE
Don't be silly.
(taking his hand in hers)
I'm planning to persuade you. After all, we have all night.

FRANK
(all smiles)
You can <u>try</u> all you want ...

149 INT. JANICE'S BEDROOM - DAWN

Janice stirs under the sheets as a slat of sunlight pokes across the room. She stretches an arm out across the bed, feels the empty space beside and looks up groggily at Frank as he finishes dressing.

Frank catches her looking at him.

FRANK
I gotta get going.

JANICE
Meet me for dinner tonight?

FRANK
Sure.
(a beat)
I'm surprised.

JANICE
About what?

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED:

FRANK
That you're not angry at me because I won't get you into the Kumite.

JANICE
It's okay. I'll get over it.

Frank gives her a kiss goodbye and leaves the apartment. As soon as the door closes Janice jumps out of bed.

150 EXT. FORBIDDEN CITY - MORNING

As the Triad escort leads Frank through the narrow alleys and byways, we notice a SEXY WOMAN following them.

WE FOLLOW HER FROM BEHIND as she follows Frank. Dressed in a low cut tank top, black leather mini slit to the hip, black fishnet stockings and spike heels, she appears to be just another one of the call girls who patrol the Forbidden City for action. Heads turn as she moves by.

151 EXT. KUMITE ARENA - MORNING

Frank and his tattooed escort approach the Triad bouncers stationed at the arena entrance. The Sexy Woman is still behind them.

After Frank is allowed in by the bouncers, the Woman veers off from the entrance and hooks her arm around a well-dressed gentleman about to enter the arena through the spectators' entrance -- it's Hiro Satori! The bouncer at that door nods approvingly as Hiro glides past with the Sexy Woman on his arm.

152 INT. ARENA

As on the first day of the Kumite, participants qualify for their second day bouts by breaking bricks, boards, etc. Victor spots Frank entering the arena and rushes over to him.

VICTOR
Where the hell have you been? You can't just disappear in the middle of the Kumite like that! I got a rep to uphold, y'know. You don't tell me nothin', Jackson don't tell me nothin' ... you guys are makin' me crazy.

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED:

FRANK
I'm here now, aren't I?

VICTOR
Right. Now hurry up and go qualify.

153 ANGLE ON JACKSON

concentrating on a stack of six bricks.

JACKSON
(to Judge)
Pick a brick. Any brick.

JUDGE
Bottom one.

JACKSON
Right.

He smashes his hand into the stack of bricks, breaking nearly every one but the bottom one.

JACKSON
(trying to fake it)
See? Not a scratch on it.

The Judge isn't fooled for a moment.

JUDGE
Not "dim-mak". But you qualify.

Jackson sees Frank.

JACKSON
Yo, Frankie! Good to see ya made it.

Jackson gives Frank the high five.

FRANK
I wouldn't miss this for anything.

154 ANGLE ON HIRO

checking out the fighters trying to qualify. As he moves closer to Frank and Jackson, we see that the Sexy Woman hanging on to his arm is actually Janice!

Frank can't believe it.

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED:

FRANK
What are you doing here?

JANICE
You think this is the first time I've gone undercover to get a story?

FRANK
Hope you and your friend have a good time.

Hiro smiles at Frank.

HIRO
You feel strong today?

FRANK
I feel fine.

HIRO
You good fighter.

Hiro nods and moves to get closer to the front of the crowd. Frank turns to Victor.

FRANK
Who was that?

VICTOR
Hiro Satori. He's a recruiter for the Yakuza.
(with a grin)
Interested in relocating to Kyoto?

155 ON THE FIGHTING PLATFORM

A fight about to end as Prang connects with a powerful hook kick that knocks Toon off his feet and into the crowd. For the second day of competition, the fighting platform has been reduced to a long and narrow runway.

The Flagman hoists the flag with Prang's color.

156 CLOSE ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

revealing the names of the next two fighters: Frank and Loc Thi Minh, a Thai kick-boxer.

157 CLOSE ON HIRO

getting a fistful of gold-colored chits from a bookie. A lot of the bettors are going with Frank on this one.

158 ANGLE ON THE FIGHTING PLATFORM

as Frank and Minh take their positions to begin the second day of Kumite competition. Two sections of the platform have been removed, reducing the previous day's square to a long and narrow runway.

Frank kneels on the mat and goes through his opening ritual. Minh bows to him.

The judge steps forward and drops his arm between the two fighters.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Minh moves in aggressively and tries to land a spinning kick on Frank. Frank slips under the kick and scores a solid blow to Minh's body with a back fist.

159 CLOSE ON JACKSON

bobbing and weaving in his seat, mimicking Frank's moves.

160 VICTOR

is impressed with Frank's smoothness.

VICTOR
Poetry, man. Fuckin' poetry.

161 JANICE

watches with both wide-eyed curiousity and concern for Frank.

162 ON THE PLATFORM

Frank is in complete charge -- Minh doesn't seem capable of even hitting him. As Frank pummels Minh with a storm of kicks and punches, Minh's stamina is reduced to zero. Frank has literally worn him out. But rather than lose face with "mat-te", Minh chooses to fall backwards off the end of the runway.

163 THE SCOREBOARD

immediately lights up, signalling that Frank is the winner.

164 ON THE PLATFORM

Frank raises his arms over his head.

165 ANGLE ON CROWD

Jackson and Victor slap palms. Janice, turned off by the violence, is unwilling to acknowledge Frank's achievement. She looks away from the runway.

Hiro figures his winnings on a credit-card-size calculator. He's all smiles.

The rest of the spectators are anxious for another bout. Red chits exchange hands as the gamblers place their bets. Practically no one's interested in the gold chits this time.

166 THE SCOREBOARD

indicates why the betting is so one-sided -- represented by gold is the South American, Paredes; the red is for Chong Li!

167 ON THE FIGHTING PLATFORM

Paredes ties the gold sash around his waist at the far end of the runway. Chong Li, mounts from the other side, accompanied with boisterous APPLAUSE.

Chong Li takes his stance with supreme confidence.

Paredes bows to the Judge and to Chong Li, who of course refuses to return the bow. Paredes then signals to a friend in the crowd.

168 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

Paredes' friend, another South American fighter, switches on a large portable "boom box" which BLASTS OUT A RHYTHMIC LATIN AMERICAN SAMBA.

169 ON THE PLATFORM

The judge starts the fight.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

As Chong Li charges down the narrow runway, Paredes, the master of kampalo, reacts to the RHYTHM OF THE MUSIC. He spins into a series of kicks and punches, all synchronized to the beat, and lays a punishing pattern of blows against Chong Li's body. The blows to Chong Li's gut seem to be the most damaging.

Chong Li, caught by surprise for just a moment, defends himself as best he can with double blocks and footwork. He retreats towards his end of the runway.

Then Chong Li launches his counter-attack with a flurry of forearm punches and elbow strikes. A swift double-kick into Paredes' face knocks the graceful South American for a loop. Paredes staggers backwards and almost falls off the end of the platform.

Chong Li stops him! Instead of letting the match end, Chong Li wants it to continue. It's as if he wants to punish Paredes for embarrassing him in the opening moments of the bout.

He grabs Paredes by the ghi and hurls him towards the center of the platform. Paredes falls forward and hits the canvas face-first.

Paredes gets to his feet. His lips and nose are bleeding. He seems woozy. Chong Li spins into another attack and lands a roundhouse kick to Paredes' middle, doubling the out-classed fighter over.

Then, with a spectacular leap, Chong Li dives over Paredes, tumbles into a forward roll and rises in one move. He follows this with a devastating back kick which sends his opponent to the mat once again.

170 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

eating it all up. They start CHANTING Chong Li's name.

171 CLOSE ON JANICE

revolted by what she sees. It's much too violent for her.

172 FRANK AND JACKSON

watch the fight dispassionately. They're looking for weaknesses in Chong Li's technique.

173 ON THE PLATFORM

Chong Li baits Paredes, daring him to try to lay a finger on him. Paredes lunges, Chong Li sidesteps him, and the pitiful South American is left looking like a fool.

As Paredes turns back to Chong Li, he's pounded by a flying jump kick that catches him in the head. Paredes goes down again. He's had enough. As Chong Li winds up to deliver the coup de grace, Paredes holds his hand up to surrender.

PAREDES
Mat-te! .... MAT-TE!

Chong Li winds down, triumphant again. He watches impassively as Paredes is helped off the platform.

174 CHONG LI'S TRAINER

beams proudly.

175 MONTAGE:

During this sequence, we focus on Frank and Chong Li as they devastate one fighter after another. They alternate breaking the records for the fastest kayo and the fastest punch thrown.

The montage should also project the intense rivalry growing between them. As if he were sending a message to Frank, Chong Li intensifies the brutality of his fighting.

We also see that others advance through the field of martial artists: Prang, Luu, Fukai, Morra, Yasuda and of course, Jackson.

Janice jots down notes in a small pad but it should be evident that she can't stomach this kind of violence.

176 CLOSE ON FUKAI

dressed in a traditional Sumo loincloth, tosses a handful of salt over the edge of the runway. He moves to the other corner and repeats the ritual.

177 WIDER ANGLE

The Sumo turns to face Frank. Then he plants a leg down, rolls his weight to the other one. Twice Frank's size, Fukai glares at him menacingly-- he didn't get this far in the Kumite to lose now.

178 JAPANESE SPECTATORS

are chanting "Fukai! Fukai!" Hiro, standing by a bookie, is trying to decide who to bet on. Janice watches as he finally grabs a gold-colored chit (Frank's color)!

179 ON THE RUNWAY

The Judge stands between Frank and the Sumo.

180 ANGLE ON JACKSON

rising out of his seat.

JACKSON
Kick his fat ass, Frankie!

181 ON THE RUNWAY

Once again, the Judge's arm is lowered.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Fukai rumbles down the runway like a rogue bull elephant. Frank stops the charge by planting a solid foot in the Sumo's face.

Fukai's head reels backwards from the blow but the tremendous momentum of his huge body carries him into Frank, dumping Frank onto the canvas. Before Frank has a chance to rebound from the impact, Fukai clamps a bearhug on him!

Face to face with Frank, Fukai begins to squeeze the breath out of him! Frank's face turns red as he struggles for air!

182 ANGLE ON JACKSON, VICTOR AND JANICE

Janice can't watch Frank being crushed by Fukai. Victor stands and begins pacing as he watches Frank fight to free himself. Jackson strains empathically with Frank, his own face turning red with effort!

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED:

JACKSON
(under his breath)
C'mon, Frankie!

183 ANGLE ON CHONG LI

grinning, pleased that he won't have to fight this brash, young American after all.

184 HIRO

is stunned -- his roll is about to come to an end.

185 ANGLE ON FRANK AND FUKAI

locked together by Fukai's grip. Frank's face is blue. In a desperate move, he butts his head against Fukai's! The Sumo winces as blood streams down his forehead, but like the Terminator in a loincloth, he's unstoppable.

Time's running out for Frank. Desperate, he prepares for the only move that can free him. Reaching behind Fukai, Frank lightly "taps" the nape of the Sumo's neck. The concentration on Frank's face tells what he's doing -- the death touch! The effect is explosive -- Fukai breaks away from Frank as though a jolt of electricity surged through him! He staggers backwards gasping for breath!

186 FRANK

wastes no time, and follows up with a thunderbolt punch to Fukai's nose.

187 ANGLE ON JACKSON

leaping out of his seat!

JACKSON
All right Frankie! Tear him up!

188 VICTOR

starts a CHANT:

VICTOR
Dux! Dux! Dux!

189 HIRO

carried away with the excitement of Frank's comeback, picks up the chant.

HIRO
Dux! Dux! Dux!

Janice hides her eyes with her arms.

190 OTHERS IN THE CROWD

join in, amazingly -- "DUX! DUX! DUX!"

191 FRANK AND FUKAI

stand apart for another go at each other. Enraged, the Sumo heaves himself at Frank, a three-hundred pound kamikaze! Taking advantage of Fukai's tremendous momentum, Frank drops to his back on the canvas, thrusts his legs into the Sumo's expansive gut, and rolls to launch him off the runway!

192 ANGLE ON JAPANESE SPECTATORS

horrified as this flying whale sails towards them. They scramble for safety!

Fukai lands on a group of chairs, flattening them!

193 JACKSON

raises his arms over his head like a football ref signalling a successful field goal.

JACKSON
It's good!

194 JANICE

peeks an eye open. She's relieved to see that it's over and Frank is still in one piece.

195 CLOSE ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

flashing Frank's name as the winner of the bout.

196 ANGLE ON PLATFORM

Jackson and Victor are there to congratulate Frank when he leaps off the runway.

JACKSON
(patting Frank on the back)
Good going, kid!

VICTOR
(tossing Frank a towel)
You made sushi out of him!

Frank wipes the sweat off his face.

197 IN THE CROWD

Janice, disgusted with the fighting, moves away from the platform. Hiro sees her leaving and follows her. When he catches up to her he taps her on the shoulder.

HIRO
Where you going?

JANICE
Out of here.

HIRO
You come Tokyo with me?

She gives him a disdainful look.

JANICE
No, I don't come Tokyo with you.

Hiro pulls out a wad of yen.

HIRO
I pay good money.

JANICE
Just what kind of a girl do you think I am?

Hiro looks bewildered as the CROWD around them starts chanting. Both Janice and Hiro look up at the scoreboard.

198 CLOSE ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

Chong Li's name is already up there as one of the next fighters -- then the name of his opponent appears..... Jackson!

199 ANGLE ON THE TRIO OF FRANK, JACKSON AND VICTOR

Frank and Victor exchange a concerned look. Jackson reacts with bravado.

JACKSON
Time to separate the men from the boys.

VICTOR
Just be careful Chong Li doesn't separate your head from your body.

Jackson ties a gold sash around his ghi, takes some deep breaths. Frank watches Chong Li mount the runway.

200 ANGLE ON THE PLATFORM

as Chong Li stretches. Chong Li spots Frank studying him. They exchange stares.

201 FRANK

turns to Jackson.

FRANK
Hit him in the gut. He's soft there.

JACKSON
What're you talking about?

FRANK
Chong Li hates taking blows to the stomach. That's how Paredes caught him off guard. You concentrate on his middle and wear him down. And stay away from his right leg!

JACKSON
Relax, Frankie, I got it under control.

202 ANGLE ON SEVERAL BOOKIES

exchanging money for red chits. Nobody is betting on Jackson.

203 CLOSE ON HIRO

with a stack of red chits. He knows better than to bet against Chong Li.

204 AT THE BACK OF THE ARENA

Janice lingers at the exit, unable to tear herself away from the Jackson-Chong Li fight.

205 ON THE PLATFORM

the Judge starts the match in the usual way.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Chong Li immediately leaps into a flying spinning kick and smashes his right foot into Jackson's ribs. He follows it up with a second spinning right that hammers into Jackson's temple. Jackson reels backwards.

206 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

SCREAMING, waving their red chits in the air.

207 FRANK

jumps to his feet.

FRANK
Get away from him!

He starts towards the platform. Victor restrains him.

VICTOR
It's his fight, Frank. Not yours.

208 ON THE PLATFORM

Chong Li continues his assault on Jackson, punishing him with powerful kicks with his right leg -- just as Frank warned. Jackson wavers, the beating is taking its toll on him.

Jackson finally manages to break off the attack by withdrawing to the end of the runway. Chong Li beckons to him.

209 ANGLE ON FRANK AND VICTOR

anxiously pulling for their friend.

FRANK
The gut! Go for his gut!

210 ON THE PLATFORM

Jackson and Chong Li go at it again. As they maneuver towards each other, Chong Li leaps into another flying kick -- but this time Jackson is ready for it.

Jackson dives into a forward roll and slips under Chong Li as the muscular Korean sails over him. As Jackson gets to his feet he hooks a kick into Chong Li's gut, doubling him over, but it's a case of too little, too late. Before Jackson can follow it up, Chong Li is on him again.

This time the Korean lashes out with a back fist to Jackson's chest that knocks the wind out of him. A second blow smashes into Jackson's windpipe. Jackson is unable to breathe for an instant. As he strains for air, Chong Li winds up to deliver one of his famous spinning kicks. Jackson takes it on the side of his head and is knocked to the floor, so dazed that everyone in the arena knows that the fight is over.

211 ANGLE ON FRANK AND VICTOR

They're disappointed but not totally surprised. Then Victor notices something.

VICTOR
Hey, what's that fucker doing?!

212 CHONG LI

winds up for another kick -- a kick to end all kicks -- a kick to end Jackson.

213 JACKSON

lies on the mat in front of Chong Li, nearly unconscious. He tries to raise his head up to say "mat-te", but he doesn't have the strength.

214 CHONG LI

leaps into the air -- SLOW MOTION -- and spins towards Jackson, his "killer" right leg fully extended ...

215 JANICE

turns away from the platform ...

216 FRANK

pushes his way through the crowd to the runway, but he's too late as ...

217 ON THE RUNWAY

Chong Li slams the heel of his foot into Jackson's forehead!

218 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Frank, Victor and Janice sit tensely. A CHINESE DOCTOR wisks in.

DOCTOR
You may see your friend now.

219 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Jackson lies in bed, his head bandaged, his eyes shut. Plasma and saline run intravenously into his arms. Frank, Janice and Victor are quietly led into the room by the Doctor. They move close to the bed.

FRANK
Ray?

Jackson opens his eyes and looks at Frank.

FRANK
The doctor says you're gonna be okay.

Jackson nods.

VICTOR
Yeah, you'll be outta here in a week.

FRANK
I'm takin' Chong Li out of the tournament. I promise you.

JANICE
(flying off the handle)
You think that's what he wants?! Someone to share the room with?!

FRANK
Please, Janice. Stay out of this.

(CONTINUED)

219 CONTINUED:

JANICE
I don't want to see you get hurt.

FRANK
Then don't watch.

DOCTOR
Show some respect. If you want to argue, go somewhere else.

Janice marches out of the room. Frank follows her.

220 INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Frank grabs her by the arm.

FRANK
You aren't even trying to understand what this is all about, are you?

JANICE
What's to understand about a bunch of guys who think they have to prove themselves by beating each others' brains out? I think it's pathetic.

FRANK
Why'd you become a reporter?

JANICE
What does that have to do with it?

FRANK
Just answer the question.

JANICE
My father was a reporter. I was a good writer ... it seemed like the right thing for me to do.

FRANK
And you want to be the best reporter you can be, for him as well as yourself, right?

JANICE
That's right.

FRANK
Well, I'm just trying to be the best I can be also. Not just for me but for Tanaka, too.

(CONTINUED)

220 CONTINUED:

Victor comes out of Jackson's room.

JANICE
That's just great, Frank. Go ahead. I just hope you don't end up like Jackson... or worse.

She breaks away from him and runs down the corridor.

VICTOR
You're blowing it, Frank. Forget about the girl. Forget about getting back at Chong Li for Ray. You have a chance to take it all tomorrow. You understand? You can be the first Westerner to win this thing! But you gotta have a clear head.

221 EXT. KOWLOON STREET - NIGHT

Frank wanders aimlessly, deep in thought. He accidently brushes into someone, looks up and sees:

222 CHONG LI

staring at him menacingly!

223 FRANK

recoils into a fighting stance, ready to take him on right now ...

224 A YOUNG CHINESE MAN

reacts as Frank prepares to fight him -- it wasn't Chong Li, just a hallucination!

225 FRANK

bows apologetically, continues down the street, confused.

226 EXT. HONG KONG HARBOR - NIGHT

The Star Ferry streams across the water towards the island of Hong Kong. Victoria Peak looms in the distance.

227 EXT. STAR FERRY - NIGHT

Frank leans against the rail and stares into the indigo waters of the harbor. A light drizzle starts to fall.

228 EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Janice hesitates on the stone steps. She's changed her clothes, reverting to her conservative journalistic style.

229 INT. CAPTAIN CHEN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Janice sits across from Chen's desk. He brings her a cup of tea.

CAPTAIN CHEN
Why are you so interested in stopping the Kumite?

JANICE
Someone almost got killed today. I have a friend fighting in it and I don't want him to get hurt.

Chen sits down at his desk.

CAPTAIN CHEN
Who is he?

JANICE
His name is Frank Dux.

Chen reacts to the name.

CAPTAIN CHEN
You must know that we have no jurisdiction in the Forbidden City.

JANICE
Isn't there something you can do?

CAPTAIN CHEN
Not to stop the Kumite... but perhaps to keep your friend from getting hurt.

230 EXT. TRAM - NIGHT

The tram to Victoria Peak makes its ascent.

231 INT. TRAM - NIGHT

Frank stares through the window at the lights of Hong Kong. As his eyes meet with his own reflection in the glass he sees Chong Li standing right beside him.

Frank spins around -- but there's no one there. He looks around the tram interior. There's no Chong Li. His mind is playing tricks on him. He draws a deep breath -- he has to pull himself together.

232 EXT. VICTORIA PEAK - NIGHT

Curtains of rain drench the mountaintop, where Frank executes the "nine hands cutting" meditation. Lightning flashes and thunder BOOMS around him but his mind is elsewhere.

TANAKA (O.S.)
Always remember -- your greatest enemy is inside you! To conquer another, you must first conquer your self.

DISSOLVE TO:

233 EXT. VICTORIA PEAK - DAWN

Frank completes the "nine hands cutting" meditation as the first rays of sunlight hit the Kowloon across the bay from Frank's perch. He rises, his spirit renewed.

234 INT. KUMITE ARENA

An SRO crowd crams into the chamber.

Victor checks his watch as he paces near the entrance.

VICTOR
(to himself)
Dux, where the hell are ya?

235 EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Frank hustles down a narrow passageway that leads to the rendezvous point with the Triad escorts.

As he moves down the alley he senses something. He stops mid-way and looks around. There's nothing there. He moves on.

(CONTINUED)

235 CONTINUED:

Helmer and Rawlins suddenly step out in front of Frank, blocking his way.

FRANK
Helmer... Rawlins... you guys here for the finals?

HELMER
There aren't gonna be any finals, Dux. At least not for you.

FRANK
You gonna stop me?

RAWLINS
No.
(he SNAPS HIS FINGERS)
They will.

Four Hong Kong police move in to back them up. Captain Chen stands behind them.

FRANK
(to Helmer and Rawlins)
I didn't come this far to stop now.

HELMER
You shouldn't have come in the first place.
(to Captain Chen)
Take him.

Chen BLOWS HIS WHISTLE and the Chinese cops charge Frank. With speed and agility, Frank evades all four cops. They repeatedly charge him and he eludes them time and time again.

236 INT. KUMITE ARENA

CLOSE ON THE SCOREBOARD

announcing the pairings of the final four fighters. Frank, the only surviving Westerner, is scheduled to fight Prang.

237 ANGLE ON VICTOR AND AN OFFICIAL

Victor checks his watch.

VICTOR
Give him five more minutes. I'm sure he's on his way.

(CONTINUED)

237 CONTINUED:

OFFICIAL
Maybe he not come. Sometime young fighter lose nerve on last day.

VICTOR
Frank Dux doesn't lose his nerve!

OFFICIAL
I agree to five more minutes. No more. He not here, he disqualified!

238 EXT. ALLEY - DAY

All four of the cops converge on Frank -- two from the front and two from behind. Frank suddenly leaps straight up and clamps his hands around a metal pipe that traverses the narrow alley. The four cops collide into each other.

239 RAWLINS

draws his taser and aims it at Frank.

RAWLINS
You're really bein' a hardass, you know that?

240 HELMER

scales the side of another shack and crosses the metal roof.

241 CHEN AND THE FOUR COPS

watch, letting the pros handle this guy.

242 ANGLE ON FRANK AND RAWLINS

Rawlins approaches Frank but stops ten feet away from him.

FRANK
You ought to be careful with that. Remember, you don't want me to get hurt.

Rawlins reaches in his jacket pocket and pulls out a pair of handcuffs. He tosses them to Frank.

(CONTINUED)

242 CONTINUED:

RAWLINS
Put 'em on and I won't have to use it.

Frank reaches down to pick up the handcuffs, but instead grabs the plastic lid from a trash can. Raising it in front of him like a shield, Frank moves in on Rawlins.

RAWLINS
I'm warning you ...

Frank keeps moving.

243 ANGLE ON ROOF

Standing at the edge of the roof, Helmer looks down at Frank advancing on Rawlins. He gets ready to jump.

244 RAWLINS

fires the taser at Frank. An electric dart flashes from the gun.

245 FRANK

blocks the dart with the lid and deflects it into the metal roof.

246 ANGLE ON ROOF

The electricity discharges into the metal roof, blasting Helmer off his feet. He topples off the roof onto Rawlins and knocks him over.

247 FRANK

grabs the taser.

FRANK
It's been fun. I'll see you at the airport tomorrow.

Frank tosses the taser in a garbage can and heads for the Kumite arena. Chen and his men stand respectfully as Frank moves away.

248 JANICE

emerges ~~from~~ behind one of the shacks and surveys the damage.

249 RAWLINS AND HELMER

pick themselves up. Rawlins starts walking in the direction of the Kumite arena.

HELMER
Now what?

RAWLINS
We can't stop the sonovabitch, we might as well go root for him.

Helmer and Janice exchange a look and reluctantly tag after him.

250 INT. KUMITE ARENA - DAY

The Official checks the scoreboard clock and walks towards Victor.

OFFICIAL
Time up. We can wait no longer.

VICTOR
C'mon, gimme one more minute. I give you my word he'll be here.

The Official shakes his head "no".

OFFICIAL
Must follow rules.

HIRO (O.S.)
Where Mr. Dux?

Victor turns around. Hiro is standing there.

VICTOR
Y'know, I wish everyone would just calm down. I said he'd be here.

OFFICIAL
Too late.

HIRO
Too late?
(pulling out a wad of yen)
No such thing as too late!

(CONTINUED)

250 CONTINUED:

Hiro stuffs the money into the Official's hand.

VICTOR
Well, whaddya know! There he is now!

Hiro quickly snatches his money back and puts it in his pocket.

251 FRANK

wades through the crowd and joins Victor and Hiro. Victor masks his relief and tries to be stern with Frank.

VICTOR
It's about fuckin' time!

FRANK
Sorry.

HIRO
How you feel today, Dux?

FRANK
Terrific. I'm already warmed up.

HIRO
(mispronouncing)
Tellific!

VICTOR
What's with the Yakuza, Frank?

FRANK
He's a fan.
(a beat, looks around)
So let's do it.

252 EXT. KUMITE ARENA

Helmer and Rawlins bribe their way into the Kumite. Janice undoes the top buttons of her blouse, adjusts her hair and hikes up her skirt a little to get into the arena.

253 ANGLE ON THE FIGHTING PLATFORM

which has been modified once again. For the third and final day of the Kumite it has been transformed into a "rooftop" -- two 6' by 12' sections that slope at 30 degree angles and meet at an apex that is ten feet off the floor. At their lowest points the sides of the rooftop remain a good 5' off the ground.

(CONTINUED)

253 CONTINUED:

Frank and Prang exchange bows. The Judge steps forward and drops his arm to start the match.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Frank and Prang begin to circle one another on the sloping surface. Frank moves into a position downslope from his opponent and stops.

Prang sees this as an opportunity to make his move. But as he lunges forward Frank plants a foot into his gut -- eye-level with Frank because of their relative positions on the slope.

Prang is thrown backwards onto the platform. Frank gives him the time to get to his feet again.

254 CLOSE ON HIRO

encouraging Frank to finish him off.

255 AT THE REAR OF THE ARENA

Helmer, Rawlins and Janice press forward through the crowd to get a better view.

256 ON THE PLATFORM

Prang's next attack is a front kick to Frank's balls which Frank easily parries. Prang attempts another kick to the same area. Frank dances away this time. He shakes his head at Prang.

FRANK
Not nice.

257 CLOSE ON VICTOR

with his fist raised in the air.

VICTOR
Show him how it's done, Frank!

258 ON THE PLATFORM

Prang tries it again, only this time Frank lets him have it -- a solid heel smash to Prang's privates. Prang drops like a rock and coils into a fetal position. Frank stands over him, ready to uncork a second one ...

PRANG
(moaning)
Mat-te! Mat-te!

259 VICTOR

stands up and cheers.

VICTOR
That a boy, Frank! Mat-te his ass!

260 HELMER AND RAWLINS

are SCREAMING for Frank at the top of their lungs.

261 HIRO

starts CHANTING Frank's name.

HIRO
Dux! Dux! Dux! Dux!

He rallies the spectators sitting around him. They join in the CHANTING.

OTHER SPECTATORS
Dux! Dux! Dux! Dux!

262 CLOSE ON CHONG LI AND HIS TRAINER

both very unhappy with the proceedings.

263 THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

wipes the Frank's name off and replaces it with the names of the next pairing -- Chong Li vs. Luu.

264 THE CROWD

goes berserk, as they break out red streamers (Chong Li's color) and wave them in the air.

265 ON THE PLATFORM

The Chong Li vs. Luu bout is already in progress as the Korean Kumite champion devastates his opponent with a series of his famous kicks. Chong Li is even more dangerous on the sloped platform. By starting his flying kicks at the apex he gains even more height and momentum than he usually musters.

The final blow is a spinning roundhouse kick which knocks Luu off the platform.

266 CHONG LI'S FANS

go crazy again.

267 AT THE APEX OF THE SLOPED PLATFORM

Chong Li raises his arms in triumph and basks in the accolades, but his eyes are focused on only one man in the entire arena ...

268 FRANK

dispassionately stares back at Chong Li. He's struggling not to hate this sadistic bastard's guts!

The stage is now set for their confrontation.

269 THE CROWD

almost in unison, looks at the scoreboard.

270 CLOSE ON THE ELECTRONIC SCOREBOARD

flashing in half a dozen different languages:

FINAL: DUX vs. CHONG LI

271 THE CROWD

ROARS with approval.

272 ON THE PLATFORM

Chong Li raises his arms in triumph once again. The NOISE AND THE CHEERING continue at a fevered pitch.

(CONTINUED)

272 CONTINUED:

The Janitor climbs onto the platform and begins mopping around Chong Li. Chong Li hops off the platform and joins his Trainer.

273 ANGLE ON VICTOR AND FRANK

standing by the platform. Victor looks more nervous than Frank -- he can't stand still.

VICTOR
(rapid-fire)
This is it Frank -- you could make history here today. Just relax, okay?
(looks around)
This place is a goddam zoo! I mean check these people out! They're out of their skulls!
(back to Frank)
Can you believe it? It's amazin'!

Frank looks at him, absolutely calm -- the man is composed.

VICTOR
Frank -- you okay?

FRANK
I'm ready.

274 IN THE CROWD

a fury of betting, red and gold chits changing hands like trading orders on the floor at the New York Stock Exchange.

275 HIRO

is having trouble making up his mind. He impulsively goes for the red (Chong Li's color), then changes his mind and exchanges a wad of yen for a handful of gold chits (Frank's color).

276 RAWLINS, HELMER AND JANICE

are thrust forward as the crowd surges toward the platform.

277 ANGLE ON CHONG LI AND HIS TRAINER

huddled together, going over last minute strategy.

278 FRANK

moves to the platform. Victor walks beside him.

279 CHONG LI

also starts for the platform. His Trainer accompanies him.

280 THE TWO FINALISTS

converge. Their eyes lock.

CHONG LI
(scoffing at him)
You break my records. Now I break you... like I break your friend.

Frank says nothing. He just stares at Chong Li.

281 VICTOR AND THE TRAINER

eye each other. Chong Li's Trainer grins arrogantly, sure his man will win. Victor nods, smiles back, then gives him the finger.

282 FRANK AND CHONG LI

separate to mount the rooftop.

283 ANGLE ON THE SLOPED PLATFORM

Frank and Chong Li face each other on the opposite slopes. The Judge stands between them on the apex and instructs them to bow.

JUDGE
Shomen ni Rei!
(Bow to the front!)

Frank and Chong Li bow to the Kokurykai and I.F.A.A Officials seated in the V.I.P. bleachers.

JUDGE
Shinban ni Rei!
(Bow to the Judge!)

The two fighters do so.

(CONTINUED)

283 CONTINUED:

JUDGE
Otagai ni Rei!
(Bow to each other!)

Frank and Chong Li stare into one another's eyes as they complete their final bow. They're like caged tigers about to strike.

Chong Li smacks his closed fist into his open palm -- the salute for "no obligations" (i.e. no quarter). Frank returns the same salute.

JUDGE
Kamaete!
(Take a fighting stance!)

Both fighters ready themselves. The Judge slowly begins backing away before issuing the final command.

284 THE CROWD

tenses. They know all hell is about to break loose.

285 ON THE PLATFORM

The Judge drops his hand when he reaches the edge of the rooftop.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Chong Li immediately drives in with a hook kick. Frank deflects it with his arm and counters with a quick heel kick to Chong Li's gut. He follows up with a knuckle hand to Chong Li's jaw.

286 IN THE CROWD

Frank's fans, including Victor and Hiro, go wild!

287 UP ON THE ROOF

Frank delivers a piledriving ballfoot to Chong Li's chest, slamming him backward -- the small of Chong Li's back whacks against the apex of the roof! Chong Li backflips over the peak of the roof and lands on both feet on the other side!

288 FRANK

waits for him.

289 CHONG LI

is getting pissed. He sprints up the roof, leaps acrobatically over the apex and plunges feet first towards Frank -- an amazing ballistic kick!

290 FRANK

beats him to the draw, front kicks Chong Li as he plunges. Chong Li goes down!

291 IN THE CROWD

Victor goes nearly epileptic!

VICTOR
Attaway Frank! Stomp his butt!

Rawlins and Helmer can't contain their excitement either.

RAWLINS
Go Dux!

Janice, riveted, watches the fight, crumpling the notepad in her hands.

292 CHONG LI

gathers himself up.

293 HIS TRAINER

YELLS at him from the floor.

294 ANGLE ON ROOFTOP

Frank and Chong Li mix it up again. As before, Frank lets Chong Li initiate the action. They go at it like demons, each displaying a staggering repertory of martial arts attacks and counters. Chong Li fights ferociously, making it clear he intends to destroy Frank. Frank fights with laser concentration -- no emotion, no wasted movement, just pure essence of martial arts discipline.

(CONTINUED)

294 CONTINUED:

As Chong Li struggles to hit Frank with a solid kick, Frank steadily works on Chong Li's gut, wearing him down, hitting him where it hurts him the most. Chong Li tries to get away from him but Frank snaps a headlock on him and pummels his gut.

295 HIRO

revels in the beating Frank is giving Chong Li. He taps someone standing next to him and waves his gold chits at him.

HIRO
Dux my man!

296 ON THE ROOFTOP

Chong Li, his head still locked in the crook of Frank's arm, is getting desperate. He jerks his hands to his eyes and SCREAMS like a banshee.

The Judge moves in for a closer look, decides Frank must be gouging Chong Li's eyes, BLOWS HIS WHISTLE to stop the match.

JUDGE
Hansoku! Foul!

Frank, immediately loosens his grip, allowing Chong Li to escape. He turns to the Judge.

FRANK
What's the problem?

297 VICTOR

can't believe Chong Li's trying the oldest trick in the book.

VICTOR
That's bullshit, Ref, and you know it!

298 THE CROWD

BOOS! This is the greatest fight they've ever seen. They don't want it stopped now.

299 ON THE ROOFTOP

Chong Li catches his breath. While the Judge deals with Frank he moves to the edge of the platform. His Trainer hands him a towel. As Chong Li grabs it, the Trainer places his hand over Chong Li's, slipping a capsule into Chong Li's palm.

Chong Li looks at the capsule. The Trainer closes Chong Li's hand around it and nods to him.

300 CLOSE ON CHONG LI'S HANDS

as he crushes the capsule, releasing a fine powdery chemical into his hands. He closes his fist tightly around the powder.

301 ANGLE ON FRANK AND THE JUDGE

The judge jabs his finger at Frank.

JUDGE
No gouging eye! Next time, you lose fight.

FRANK
I wasn't anywhere near his eyes!

JUDGE
No talk back!

Frank bows to him.

302 ANGLE ON VICTOR NEAR THE PLATFORM

He can't restrain himself.

VICTOR
Blow it out yer ass, ref!

303 ON THE PLATFORM

The Judge indicates to both fighters that they should return to their respective slopes. He backs away and drops his arm to restart the fight.

JUDGE
Hajemai!

Once again, Frank and Chong Li lash into one another with everything they've got. As Chong Li whirls into another spinning kick, Frank ducks under it.

304 IN SLOW MOTION

As Chong Li follows through with his flubbed move he whips his hand towards Frank's face and furtively hurls the fine powder into Frank's eyes.

305 FRANK

nails Chong Li with an explosive open hand smash, triggering a torrent of blood from Chong Li's nose. As Chong Li regains his balance, Frank begins blinking his eyes uncontrollably.

306 FRANK'S POV

Chong Li, standing five feet away from Frank, BLURS.

307 FRANK

continues blinking, unable to clear his vision.

308 CHONG LI

charges -- blitzes Frank with a powerful spinning kick.

309 FRANK

goes down for the first time in the match. He rolls onto his knees and rubs his eyes.

310 VICTOR

sees there's something drastically wrong with Frank but he isn't sure what.

311 IN THE CROWD

Chong Li's fans finally have something to cheer about -- they SHOUT, SCREAM, wave their red streamers like wild men!

312 HIRO

looks like he's had the wind knocked out of him -- he can't believe Chong Li is getting the upper hand.

313 JANICE

realizes there must be something wrong. She works her way through the crowd to the platform.

314 ON THE PLATFORM

As Frank rises from his knees, Chong Li knee-kicks him back to the surface of the platform. Blood trickles down the side of Frank's head.

315 VICTOR

pounds on the platform to draw the Judge's attention.

VICTOR
Hey, Ref, foul! C'mon! Stop the match!

316 THE JUDGE

pays no attention to Victor.

317 FRANK

on his knees, once again trying to clear his vision.

318 FRANK'S POV

a blurry field of light. There are no shapes -- no Judge, no Chong Li.

The ROAR of the crowd intensifies.

319 FRANK

focuses his hearing.

The ROAR of the crowd subsides -- we are HEARING what Frank hears -- and a BREATHING SOUND increases along with the RUSTLING SOUND OF CLOTH, the PADDING OF A FOOT ...

Frank's perception of time has altered to compensate for his temporary blindness.

320 CHONG LI

maneuvers around Frank, angling for a shot at Frank's kidney.

321 FRANK

HEARS Chong Li's movement!

322 EXT. TANAKA'S HOUSE - NIGHT - (FLASHBACK)

Frank, blindfolded, spars with Tanaka on the sloped roof. As Tanaka moves in with a hook kick, Frank parries and ripostes with a kick of his own.

323 WIDE ANGLE ON THE PLATFORM

Chong Li sweeps in with a spinning kick to Frank's back -- Frank, acting on instinct, dodges it with a quick side roll. Chong Li kicks thin air as Frank scrambles to his feet.

Frank assumes a defensive stance. He and Chong Li begin to circle each other, with Frank relying totally on his other senses.

324 FRANK'S POV

Chong Li is a GHOSTLY BLUR -- but his FOOTSTEPS are magnified a hundred-fold as Frank eliminates the noise of the crowd and focuses on Chong Li's MOVEMENTS.

325 INT. CAVE - (FLASHBACK)

Total darkness -- except for glints of light reflected in the bull's eyes. As it charges, its SNORTING becomes surreally loud...

326 ON THE ROOFTOP AT THE KUMITE

as Chong Li launches another one of his spinning roundhouse kicks.

327 IN SLOW MOTION

WHOOSH! The SOUND OF THE KICK moving through the air at 60 mph is audible to Frank's sensitized hearing.

328 FRANK

ducks under the kick. Then, with an educated guess, he lashes out with his fist and smashes Chong Li in the gut.

329 CHONG LI

is crazed with frustration! He moves upslope to Frank and leaps into another flying kick.

330 FRANK'S POV

a BLUR descending on him from above. He can HEAR the WHOOSH of Chong Li slicing through the air.

331 EXT. BREEDING POOL - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

Frank, up to his waist in water, snatches a fish out of the pool.

332 ON THE ROOFTOP AT THE KUMITE

Frank catches Chong Li's leg in mid-air and SLAMS the Korean down on the mat.

333 IN THE CROWD

Frank's fans, Victor, Janice, Hiro, Helmer, Rawlins are all on their feet SCREAMING FOR FRANK!

334 CHONG LI'S TRAINER

is absolutely dumbstruck.

335 ON THE ROOFTOP

As Frank and Chong Li grapple at close range, slugging it out like prizefighters, Frank's vision begins to clear.

Chong Li loses control and attacks Frank's throat with a spear hand! Frank intercepts the blow with both hands and SNAPS Chong Li's wrist. Chong Li HOWLS, his right hand hanging uselessly from the broken joint -- but he still doesn't give up!

Unable to hit and block with his right arm, Chong Li has only one choice: he winds up and launches into a flying kick aimed at Frank's head. But Frank seizes the Korean mid-air by his killer leg, CRACKS it at the knee and hurls Chong Li in a broken heap onto the platform!

336 THE CROWD

CHANTS Frank's name fanatically.

337 CHONG LI

slides helplessly down the roof towards an ignominious defeat ... but it isn't over for him yet!

338 FRANK

grabs Chong Li by the ghi before he falls off and drags him halfway up the roof, where he lets the Korean drop. Frank takes a few steps away from Chong Li, who just lies there, unable to move.

339 THE CROWD

falls silent for a moment, keying in on the drama taking place on the platform.

340 FRANK

wheels around, leaps in the air and drives his heel down at Chong Li's head -- the same way Chong Li attacked Jackson when he was down!

341 CHONG LI

watches in silent terror as Frank's heel plunges towards his head ...

342 FRANK'S FOOT

SMASHES into the platform, a matchstick away from Chong Li's head, demolishing the board it hits!

343 FRANK

hoists Chong Li by the ghi.

FRANK
Say it.

344 CHONG LI

rolls his head -- can this be happening to <u>him</u>?

345 THE CROWD

stands in shocked silence.

346 ON THE PLATFORM

Frank shakes Chong Li.

FRANK
Say it!

Chong Li hesitates.

FRANK
SAY IT!

CHONG LI
(weakly)
Mat-te!

Frank releases him. Chong Li slumps to the platform.

347 ANGLE ON THE CROWD

Victor is the first one to realize it's all over. He leaps up with both arms in the air.

VICTOR
Allright, Dux!

Helmer and Rawlins are cheering. Even Janice is up on her feet.

348 THE SCOREBOARD

flashes Frank's name. He's the new Kumite champion!

349 HIRO

is so excited he tosses his gold-colored chits into the air. The people around him, realizing what he's done, immediately scramble to retrieve them.

350 FRANK

stands on the apex of the roof and bows to the Judge and the I.F.A.A. Officials -- and then to a presence only Frank is aware of.

(CONTINUED)

350 CONTINUED:

FRANK
(softly, to himself)
This was for you, Sensei.

351 INT. KUMITE ARENA - LATER

Japanese drummers BEAT OUT A RHYTHM on huge ceremonial drums as the closing ceremony begins.

Frank ascends the stairs to the Judges' Platform. He's still bloody and bruised from the final day of fighting but he walks proudly to claim his prize.

Oshima and the other Officials wait for him on the platform. The DRUMS STOP as Frank takes his place before them.

Oshima steps forward, carrying a black jade medallion carved with an ornate dragon motif. He and the other Officials bow to Frank. Frank returns the bow.

Oshima addresses the Kumite spectators who watch the proceedings in respectful silence.

OSHIMA
Almost half a century ago I watched a young man become World Champion in Full Contact Kumite. He won with a a style of fighting that I have not witnessed since then -- not until now, in this arena. His name was Tiger Tanaka and he was a Koga-Yambushi Ninja. Today I am proud to honor the Tanaka clan by awarding this trophy to Frank Dux -- a student of Tanaka's.

He pauses while the crowd APPLAUDS.

OSHIMA
(continuing)
I also note that this is the first time a Westerner has won the Kumite.
(to Frank)
Mr. Dux, you fought with inspiration. We of the Kokuryukai salute you.

Oshima solemnly places the jade medallion around Frank's neck and bows to him once again.

The CROWD THUNDERS its approval.

352 CLOSE ON JANICE

perhaps for the first time she understands what this was all about for Frank.

353 INT. JACKSON'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Frank and Janice stand by Jackson's bed. Jackson looks a lot better -- and he must be feeling better because he's drinking a beer Frank brought him.

JACKSON
Did you stomp him, Frankie?

FRANK
Worse...

JACKSON
What could be worse?

JANICE
He made him say "mat-te".

JACKSON
Alright, Frankie! But don't get too cocky, you may have to go up against me next time.

JANICE
I've got to admit, there's something remarkable about you guys.

JACKSON
(swigging his beer)
I'll drink to that.
(raises his can to Frank)
To the best!

354 EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY

Passengers climb the portable stairs to a commercial jet. Helmer and Rawlins remain at the bottom of the steps. Helmer checks his watch.

HELMER
(shaking his head)
He's not gonna show.

RAWLINS
Looks like Dux did it to us again.

(CONTINUED)

354 CONTINUED:

The last of the passengers boards the plane. There's a WHISTLE from the top of the stairs. Helmer and Rawlins look up.

Frank stands there grinning at them.

FRANK
You skinheads coming or what?

Helmer and Rawlins exchange a look. They climb the steps towards Frank.

RAWLINS
You know, Dux, you're a <u>real</u> pain in the ass.

HELMER
I'm just glad you're on our side.

As they board the jet, Frank spots Janice at the fence. She wraps her left palm over her right fist -- the martial art sign for "I have obligations".

Frank returns the gesture.

WE FREEZE AND ROLL END CREDITS

<u>THE END</u>